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Making Visible Inter-agency Working Processes in Children's Services

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Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Edinburgh

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To my teachers

Declaration

I declare that this thesis has been composed solely by myself and that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, in any previous application for a degree. Except where states otherwise by reference or acknowledgment, the work presented is entirely my own.

Harla Sara Octarra

Abstract

Inter-agency working has been promoted as a way forward to improve public services, including children's services. However, the terminology is problematic because it often overlaps with other terminologies, such as partnership or collaboration. As a consequence, when describing working arrangements between people and organisations, a 'terminological quagmire' results (Leathard, 1994, p5), with 'definitional chaos' (Ling, 2000, p83).

This definitional chaos is replicated in the on-going challenges found by research, on inter-agency working. While much literature has focussed on these challenges and solutions, little attention has been given to the processes that make up inter-agency working. My research explored inter-agency working processes at the frontline of children's services in Scotland. It examined formal mechanisms of working together, such as meetings and referral forms, which organised professionals' work and their relationships with one another.

I used institutional ethnography to investigate inter-agency working processes. The research was conducted in one local authority in Scotland over a period of eight months and within the framework of *Getting It Right For Every Child* (GIRFEC), which is the country's national policy approach for children. One component of GIRFEC is the Named Person. It is a provision that would provide every child in Scotland a professional (for most children the professional is going to be their health visitor or head teacher) to help safeguard their wellbeing by means of offering advice, support and referral to other services. This service will make teachers at promoted posts responsible for coordinating support for their pupils and will change

mechanisms of inter-agency working. The tenets of institutional ethnography allowed me to observe and trace the ways in which professionals worked together.

The research found that when professionals worked together, they shared information and that sharing of information was complicated by the burgeoning use of technology. The working processes involved revealed the power relations between people and between people and organisations: specifically, between teachers and the Children and Families team members of the council, as the latter was responsible for maintaining the formal inter-agency working mechanisms of GIRFEC.

The thesis highlights that inter-agency meetings, as formalised ways of working together, can boost professionals' confidence as they wrestle with uncertainty about their actions as professionals and how best to address children and young people's needs. This thesis also shows how policy changes changed the ways in which professionals work together. The Named Person provision of GIRFEC has ignited public debates in Scotland. This thesis is contributing to the debates by providing evidence on how this new role has changed the relationships between the teachers and other professionals. This is pertinent as the Scottish Government is currently re-designing the Named Person policy.

Lay Summary

This thesis explores inter-agency working in children's services of one local authority in Scotland. Using the tenets of Institutional Ethnography, it explicates what professionals do when they work together and how their activities are related to bureaucracy, database system and procedures which shaped their work. In the context of *Getting it right for every child* policy, this thesis contributes to the debate around the Named Person provision as part of the policy. The thesis argues that, building upon analysis of relationships between professionals in the context of working together and on how inter-agency working is organised, the introduction of the Named Person is potentially changing relations between settings (School and Children and Families Team) and people. It also argues that professionals' work is coordinated through mechanisms of meetings and forms. This thesis adds another dimension to understanding 'power relations' by locating power within the working relationships in which professionals were engaged. Finally, the thesis argues that looking at inter-agency working from the frontline professionals' experiences offers a lens to understanding while professionals engage in formalised working together they show ability to make sound judgements regarding children's lives, supported by interaction with other professionals.

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Table of Contents

Declaration	i
Abstract	iii
Lay Summary	v
Acknowledgements	vii
Table of Contents	ix
List of Tables and Figures.....	xiii
List of Acronyms and Abbreviations	xiv
Chapter 1 – Introduction	1
1.1. Introduction to the thesis	1
1.2. Getting into the research topic	3
1.3. Reforming Scotland’s children services.....	6
1.3.1. Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC): A scoping review	8
1.3.2. Why GIRFEC implementation and Named Person are a suitable context for exploring inter-agency working.....	13
1.3.3. The key focus of my research	15
1.4. Definition of specific terms.....	16
1.5. Structure of the thesis	20
Chapter 2 – Literature Review	23
2.1. Introduction	23
2.2. Inter-agency working and Information sharing.....	24
2.2.1. The terminologies of inter-agency working.....	24
2.2.2. Inter-agency working: problems, benefits and approaches	30
2.2.3. Information and information sharing.....	35
2.2.4. Section conclusion	40
2.3. Revealing power relations in policy processes	41
2.3.1. Conceptualisations of power in studies of bureaucracy and organisations	43
2.3.2. The tenets of Institutional Ethnography.....	48
2.3.3. Section conclusion	53
2.4. <i>Getting it right for every child</i> policy.....	54
2.4.1. What is GIRFEC?	54
2.4.2. Tensions in implementing GIRFEC for frontline service and partnership working.....	64

2.4.3. The Named Person: the what, the who and the problems	67
2.4.4. Section conclusion	77
2.5. Conclusion	79
Chapter 3 – Methodology	83
3.1. Introduction	83
3.2. Research aim and questions	83
3.3. Methodological approach and research methods	85
3.3.1. Applying Institutional Ethnography	85
3.3.2. Case Study Selection	90
3.3.3. Preliminary Fieldwork	93
3.3.4. Research Methods	94
3.4. Fieldwork	100
3.4.1. Entry Point	100
3.4.2. The Informants	102
3.4.3. Ethical Considerations	103
3.5. Reflexivity	106
3.6. Generating data	110
3.6.1. Observations to locality forums and other meetings	111
3.6.2. ‘Talking to people’	120
3.6.3. Analysing documents	130
3.6.4. Making visual representations of the data	131
3.7. Data analysis	133
3.8. Conclusion	141
Chapter 4 – People and Information: Making Inter-Agency Working Work	143
4.1. Introduction	143
4.2. Defining and producing information	145
4.2.1. Information: the what, who and how	146
4.3. Enabling information sharing: professional judgement, administrative staff and technology	158
4.3.1. Professional judgement	158
4.3.2. The administrative staff and technology	177
4.4. Implications for Named Person	182
4.5. Conclusion	190
Chapter 5 – The Organisation of Professionals’ Working Together	195
5.1. Introduction	195

5.2. Professionals' Engagement in Meetings: key structures, early intervention and relationships	198
5.2.1. 'Intervening Early': how meetings address the early intervention discourse	203
5.2.2. Processing information formally: how procedures of meetings reflect power relations between the Children and Families team and the school ..	206
5.2.3. Teachers are doing elements of 'social work'	213
5.3. 'It is ok to be uncertain': how meetings are perceived as supportive spaces for professionals.....	217
5.3.1. Adopting a reflexive approach.....	218
5.3.2. Creating a multi-agency meeting as a 'safety valve' for professionals ..	224
5.4. Using Forms to Coordinate Professionals' Work.....	232
5.4.1. Performative texts	235
5.4.2. Named Person creates new forms – moving relations to text.....	239
5.5. Conclusion.....	242
Chapter 6 – The Named Person: a person or a service?.....	247
6.1. Introduction	247
6.2. The Named Person as a <i>person</i>	250
6.3. The Named Person as a <i>service</i>	261
6.3.1. Supporting the Named Person(s)	262
6.3.2. The Named Person service changes the implementation of GIRFEC	266
6.4. Changing relations.....	269
6.4.1. Power relations: managing tensions between the role of a Named Person and the professional's remit	273
6.5. The changes of and for Ballian's Children and Families team: my note before leaving the field.....	277
6.6. Conclusion.....	283
Chapter 7 – Conclusion.....	289
7.1. Introduction	289
7.2. Answers to my research questions	290
7.2.1. Research question #1: What does inter-agency working look like within the institutional relations of GIRFEC implementation?.....	290
7.2.2. Research question #2: What do Named Persons do when they work together with other professionals in implementing GIRFEC?	295
7.3. Reflections from applying Institutional Ethnography in my research.....	301
7.4. Implications for policy and practice	304
7.5. Implications for literature and future research	307

7.5.1. Implications for the literature.....	307
7.5.2. Recommendations for future research	309
References	313
Appendices	341
Appendix 1 – Timeline of important documents showing increased commitment for integrating children’s services in Scotland	342
Appendix 2 – GIRFEC National Practice Model.....	343
Appendix 3 – Route Map for Named Person in Single and Multi-Agency Support	344
Route Map for Lead Professional in Multi-Agency Support	345
Appendix 4 – Paragraph 19 of Part 4 Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 – Provision of Named Persons	346
Appendix 5 – Level 1 and 2 Ethics Form.....	348
Appendix 6 – Research Information Sheet and Consent Forms	359
Appendix 7 – An example of an interview schedule	373
Appendix 8 – Referral Form to Primary or Secondary Locality Forum	375
Appendix 9 – Referral Form to Children and Families.....	376
Appendix 10a – The Wellbeing Concerns Form.....	379
Appendix 10b – The Wellbeing Concerns Discussion Form.....	380
Appendix 11 – The Geography of Ballian Council: locating <i>informants</i> from the Children and Families Team and the Schools.....	381

List of Tables and Figures

Table 1. Terminologies often used to represent inter-agency working.....	29
Table 2. GIRFEC 10 core components	63
Table 3. List of Observations	116
Table 4. List of Informal Talks	121
Table 5. List of Formal Interviews.....	125
Figure 1. My Entry Point	100
Figure 2. An excerpt from my research diary	108
Figure 3. Research methods	111
Figure 4. Pupils Referral Group and Secondary School Locality Forum meetings at Sisters High School	127
Figure 5. The Primary School Locality Forum at Robin Locality	128
Figure 6. The Screening Group for Non-Offending Children and Young People and the Screening Group for Offending Children and Young People	129
Figure 7. Earlier product of incorporating <i>mapping</i> and <i>layering</i> technique.....	133
Figure 8. The geography of Ballian Council and location of schools.....	145
Figure 9. The two settings for exploring the ways in which professionals work together	181
Figure 10. Multi-agency work through meetings and referral forms.....	197
Figure 11. The structure of Ballian's GIRFEC implementation groups	266

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADHD – Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

CAMHS – Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

GIRFEC – Getting it right for every child

GP – General Practitioner

ICT – Information and communication technology

IE – Institutional Ethnography

LLE – Lifelong Learning and Employability

NCS – New Community Schools

NHS – National Health Service

PRG – Pupil Referral Group

RDSG – Revised Draft Statutory Guidance

SHANARRI indicators – safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected,
responsible and included

UK – United Kingdom

UNCRC – United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1. Introduction to the thesis

The idea that different agencies should work together for better public services has been discussed, politicised, and challenged for many years. The literature about inter-agency working uses many different terminologies and this has created a ‘terminological quagmire’ (Leathard, 1994, p5). For one, ‘integration’, has been called the highest form of collaboration and thus a manifestation of inter-agency working (Packard et al., 2013). ‘Partnership’ is another term that has been widely used in explaining how health and social care work together (e.g. Ball et al., 2010; Forbes and Evans, 2008). Inter-agency ‘collaboration’, as used to represent a joint activity by two or more agencies, has become a necessity and yet challenging in practice (Bardach, 1998). Although the terminological problem has been recognised (e.g. Brown and White, 2006; Davis, 2011), inter-agency working remains a consistent policy proposal in public services.

The literature on inter-agency working has concentrated principally on explaining why agencies should work together (e.g. Bruner, 1991) and outlining the individual and organisational factors for successful/challenging collaboration (Byles, 1985; Douglas and Philpot, 1998; Percy-Smith, 2006). At the same time, cautions have been raised about offering inter-agency working as a solution for problems in public services (Bardach, 1998).

A number of theories has been used in explaining inter-agency working, including activity theory, bureaucratic analysis and systems theory (see Hill, 2012; Warmington et al., 2004). However, a closer look at what happens when

professionals work together in practice shows that it may encourage professionals' learning (Warmington et al., 2004). Because working in an inter-agency context has become integral in children's services, such an endeavour calls for an approach that is rooted in the everyday practice of frontline professionals.

One of the methodological approaches that looks at the everyday practice of public service professionals at the frontline is Institutional Ethnography (IE). IE suggests an inquiry that begins from the everyday practice, but directs its attention beyond the observable practice to the coordinating mechanisms or procedures that make the practice happen. In particular, my research made use of the methodology of IE to show the connection between professionals' work, not only with each other, but also with policies around *Getting it right for every child* (GIRFEC) and the Named Person. Therefore, this thesis will use the IE concept of *ruling relations* in making sense of what happens in practice. *Ruling relations* are "relations that coordinate people's activities across and beyond local sites of everyday experience" (Smith, 2002, p45). *Ruling relations* highlight professionals' relations to policy and structure within their organisation and to the external policies (e.g. national policies), which govern the organisation and thus shape the professionals' work.

Children's services, policy implementation and frontline practice are three keywords that represent my motivation for undertaking this PhD. Before moving on to explain the context and rationale of my research, the following section explains my professional experience and Masters degree studies that have shaped my interest in researching inter-agency working processes in children's services.

1.2. Getting into the research topic

My interest in children's services began when I was an undergraduate student and joined a voluntary group that gives tutorials and assistance to street children in shelter homes in Jakarta, Indonesia. Following that, for eight years I worked as a co-researcher in a research institute that focusses on children in difficult situations (e.g. street children and children as survivors of conflict). For the last two of these years (i.e. between 2010 and 2012) my work involved raising awareness among Government officials and practitioners (e.g. teachers and Community Health Workers) of children's rights. This allowed me to work closely with central, as well as local government officials. I became an outside observer of practices in children's services. During those two years I became interested in children's rights based policies and their implementation. This in turn led to my coming to the UK to study for an MSc in Childhood Studies.

Undertaking the Masters degree course allowed me to understand international perspectives on children's rights and introduced me to sociological perspectives on childhood. I began to explore ways to analyse child and family policies as I worked on course essays, which included such topics as Indonesia's policy for street children and Early Childhood Education policy in Indonesia. For my Masters dissertation project I then went on to analyse documents relating to the reporting mechanism in the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in Indonesia, providing an understanding of the implementation process of the Convention. This analysis suggested that the process is complex and dependent upon the implementation of policies and programmes at the national and local level.

Following that I carried my interest on to PhD level where I wanted to do research in greater depth into the implementation of children's rights based policies in Indonesia. I took time to think. I went back to Indonesia where I was asked by staff of the Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection, "*How do they (people in the UK) do child protection?*". What surprised me was not how much the Indonesian staff wanted to know about practices in other places, but how little I knew about UK's child and family policy.

During this time my supervisors advised me to familiarise myself with Scotland's policies for children. I read through Scottish Government publications and journal articles, and talked to people (i.e. council staff, Scottish Government officials, practitioners, academics and the staff of Non-Governmental Organisations) to learn of the emerging issues around such policies in Scotland. In so doing, I often came across GIRFEC and its emphasis on the importance of 'working together' between agencies and between agencies and service users.

The idea that different services must work together in offering children's services was something I could relate to from my own work experience in Indonesia. I had observed a number of so-called task forces (e.g. "the task force for implementing 'child friendly city'" and "the task for protecting street children") and on reflection, I recognised the difficulties I had witnessed when attending the task forces' meetings where professionals had different viewpoints and different ways of working. The changes that came from such inter-agency working mechanisms was mostly guidance and training modules with minimum, if any, implementation review. Yet, the call for agencies and communities to work together in protecting children is still

the common response following a case of child abuse or the death of a child in Indonesia as well as in the UK.

From this self-reflection and information gathering in Scotland, I became interested in GIRFEC but was also puzzled. On the one hand, it was (and is still) highly promoted, by the Scottish Government as an approach that would lead to improved outcomes for children and young people. And yet what I had been reading was that GIRFEC's successes had been related to its role as a working initiative to improve outcomes for children (Stradling et al., 2009) and an opportunity to improve inter-agency cooperation (Statham, 2011). On the other hand, GIRFEC's Named Person provision has been widely criticised by academics, practitioners and parents. This became apparent during the consultation period of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and continues to this day.

Coming from an interest in policy implementation and a will to learn from *being here* in Scotland, I decided to do my research on GIRFEC. I aimed from the outset of my studies to be able to take home policy analysis skills and a widened knowledge, particularly of the processes by which central government policy shapes local government and frontline practices. This is a classic issue in public policy, and is especially relevant for a structure of governance not only in Scotland but also in Indonesia. As frontline practices are the face of policy implementation, policies often appear to position the frontline workers as objects through whom changes or improvement must be made in order to achieve the policies' goals. In the process of seeking to identify the relationship between policy and practice, the research project I undertook revealed that problems at frontline practices are influenced by changes in policy.

1.3. Reforming Scotland's children services

Although partnership working, which became the New Labour Government public policy mantra in 1997 (Balloch and Taylor, 2001), has influenced Scottish public policies even before devolution¹, the present Scottish Government has extended its approach to 'partnership' or 'collaborative' working in public services (see Scottish Government, 2011; Scottish Parliament, 2013). To maintain Scottish distinctiveness, since 2007, the Scottish Government's public services have been focussing on the outcomes (Housden, 2014) and greater civic participation (Tisdall and Hill, 2011).

Children's services are an area where all UK governments have more or less agreed on the need and potential of working together: "Despite variations, all UK governments agree that children will benefit from closer working between practitioners and between agencies" (Jones and Leverett, 2008, p129). However, Scotland's child policy has been affected by a changing political landscape that characterises devolution (Tisdall and Hill, 2011).

The Scottish Government's public service reforms for children are increasingly committed to bettering Integrated Children's Services (see Appendix 1). They assert that improving outcomes for children can only be done by applying a holistic approach to intervention, and 'early intervention' is promoted as the working framework. This commitment has been the guiding trajectory of Scotland's policies for children following the Children (Scotland) Act 1995. The emphasis can be found in the publication of *For Scotland's Children* document in 2001 (see Scott, 2006),

which has been considered as a landmark for “the integration of education with other services in Scotland” (Grek et al., 2009, p29).

Since 2001, a number of national children’s policies in Scotland have promulgated the need for inter-agency working and the integration of services. For example, the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 replaced the traditional concept of special educational needs with ‘additional support needs’.

Another change has been the replacing of the child’s Record of Needs with a coordinated support plan (Stradling and Alexander, 2012); as well as the development of integrated community schools (formerly known as New Community Schools) in Scotland in 2004 (Grek et al., 2009). The GIRFEC proposal in 2005 has been considered as a policy that signalled the approach of unifying services (Grek et al., 2009) as well as being a policy that has made changes to children’s services (Stradling and Alexander, 2012).

The proposal also emphasises early intervention by asking universal services to work in partnership with other services to prevent the identified problems of children and young people from escalating (Scottish Executive, 2005). This early notion of GIRFEC is summarised succinctly by Coles and her colleagues (Coles et al., 2016), “GIRFEC is a landmark children’s policy framework to improve children’s wellbeing via early intervention, universal service provision and multi-agency coordination across organisational boundaries” (p334).

¹ Devolution is the transfer of powers from a central to a regional authority (Scottish Parliament, 2017). The legal ground for Scottish Devolution is the Scotland Act 1998, as amended by the Scotland Act 2012. Devolution in Scotland became effective in 1999 following the election of Scottish members of Parliament to the newly formed Scottish Parliament.

1.3.1. Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC): A scoping review

The (then) Scottish Executive (2005) proposals for action in *Getting it right for every child* introduces two core ideas for improving children's services; namely the vision for Scotland's children and proposals for changes in children's services. The first, the vision, sets out a number of qualities that are indicators of wellbeing – safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected and responsible, as well as included. These together form the outcomes desired for every child that they should become: responsible citizens, successful learners, confident individuals and effective contributors. These outcomes are shared with Scotland's national education policy: *Curriculum for Excellence* (Education Scotland, n.d).

The second idea is about changing practices in children's services from a situation where many are overburdened with meetings, referrals, processes, report writing, assessments and plans for children, young people and their families, and rather moving towards a more coordinated approach as the services work together to address children's and families' needs. This would mean that, "children and families should have to provide information only once about their needs" (Scottish Executive, 2005, p8). The document's emphasis is on the collective responsibility of health, education, police and social work to make sure the right support for children and families are in place (Scottish Executive, 2005, p15).

The Scottish Government (2016) defines GIRFEC as follows:

GIRFEC is the national approach in Scotland to improving outcomes and supporting the wellbeing of our children and young people by offering the right help at the right time from the right people. It supports them and their parent(s) to work in partnership with the services that can help them.

It puts the rights and wellbeing of children and young people at the heart of the services that support them – such as early years services, schools, and the NHS – to ensure that everyone works together to improve outcomes for a child or young person.²

Previous documentation on GIRFEC emphasises the need for change in the way services are being delivered. GIRFEC requires, “a positive shift in culture, systems and practice across services for children, young people and adults” (Scottish Government, 2008, p6). GIRFEC puts children ‘at the centre’, which means “children and young people should have their views listened to and they should be involved in decisions that affect them” (Scottish Government, 2010b, p17). This is one of the values and principles of GIRFEC. Another one is the need for practitioners to work together to find the best possible support. There have been studies from different contexts that promote the benefit of a ‘child-centred’ approach; from child protection (Munro, 2011), domestic abuse (Humphreys and Houghton, 2008) and transition to school for children with disabilities (Ravenscroft et al., 2017).

Over the years the Scottish Government has published a number of guidelines for progressing the implementation of GIRFEC (e.g. Scottish Government, 2008, 2010a, 2012a). Since wellbeing is core to GIRFEC, these guidelines have helped to formalise the eight wellbeing indicators mentioned earlier (safe, healthy and so on) or now better known by the acronym: SHANARRI.

These wellbeing indicators, set of values and principles are embedded in the National Practice Model (Appendix 2), which was introduced in 2008 by the Scottish

² Source: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright/what-is-girfec>. (accessed on 4 July 2017).

Government. The model acts as a tool for the practitioners in assessing the needs of children and young people, as well as for planning appropriate support. The National Practice Model encompasses an assessment, analysis, action and review process, to identify outcomes and solutions for children and young people. It is meant to be the practitioners' tool to implement GIRFEC. However, it is not meant to replace existing tools but should be used together with other tools in making sure a single plan is implemented for each child who requires additional support (Scottish Government, 2008). This practice model is a representation of GIRFEC's integrated children's services at the frontline. It suggests the need for a transformation in the way practitioners' work.

The core idea within the GIRFEC approach is the intertwining of improvement and change. The approach aims for improving outcomes for children by improving children's services. The services, in practice, are meant to focus on the resilience of the service users and to be proactive in early intervention (Davis and Smith, 2012). Outcomes, in this context, should be agreed among different agencies as they are meant to be 'joint' outcomes (Scottish Executive, 2001). Improvement of the Services requires positive changes, and there are three kinds of change required: in *system*, in *practice*, and in *culture* (Scottish Government, 2010b; Scottish Government Social Research, 2011).

System refers to the agencies' work systems, so changes in systems means how the agencies' structures, policies and procedures are adapted to enable better services (i.e. integrated practice). Scottish Government (2010b) asserts that the change in system should provide more opportunities for children and families to participate in the direction of services for them. Changes in system require information recording

and sharing between agencies to be done in a streamlined way; a single assessment and support plan (Child's Plan) should be in place when work with the child and family requires a multi-agency approach.

Practice refers to a set of actions or responses of practitioners and agencies in order to meet the needs of children and families: "It involves the skills, competence and confidence of the workforce, as well as clear roles and tasks expected from individuals" (Scottish Government, 2010b, p18). Effective practice entails integrated working. Thus changes in practice refer to the ways in which the practitioners utilise their abilities (e.g. their skills, knowledge, and competence) in order to meet the changing roles and tasks required from them.

How people do their job is a reflection of their "work culture" (both in personal relationships with co-workers and in work behaviours according to their job title).

This "work culture" also applies to the cultures of the organisations involved.

Therefore changes in *culture* have to mean changes in the language used in service delivery, and also changes in understanding the perspectives of other professions regarding children's wellbeing. These changes should lead to the achieving of an appropriate and timely service through an inter-agency, multi-professional approach which encourages dialogue between service providers and service users (Davis and Smith, 2012).

An important part of these changes is the role of Named Person and Lead Professional. The Named Persons are frontline workers with responsibility to ensure children are getting the help or services needed to promote their wellbeing. If more than one agency needs to respond to the needs of children, a Lead Professional will

take the responsibility of the Named Person. The Lead Professional will then work with children and families to ensure care is provided in a timely and appropriate way.

Nowadays, GIRFEC is the hallmark for achieving Scotland's ambition for children's policies and services. As such, GIRFEC brings together different policies for children and transforms universal services by requiring them to work more in partnership with other services. GIRFEC's overreaching framework also threads through the Government's approach to children's rights. From 2005 to 2012, the Government has published key documents for GIRFEC's implementation and has linked it with children's rights. It is the most referenced initiative in the 21 priority areas for implementing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (see Scottish Government, 2012b). During its consultation, the newly enacted Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 (the 2014 Act) supported GIRFEC's implementation (Scottish Government, 2013). In 2013, the Education and Culture Committee of the Scottish Parliament advised the Scottish Government to continue with the implementation of UNCRC by improving policies, such as GIRFEC (Scottish Parliament, 2013). The 2014 Act gives legal statute to GIRFEC through its provisions: the Named Person and Child's Plan.

It seems that, in legislation and policies, the Scottish Government has been consistent in advocating the use of inter-agency working. In practice GIRFEC has not escaped scrutiny, and there are debates about its effectiveness in improving outcomes (see for example Davis and Smith, 2012; Education Scotland, 2012). All 32 Scottish Local Authorities are supporting the implementation of GIRFEC. However, although they are committed to the values and principles of the policy, the implementation progress

varies across authorities (Education Scotland, 2012). In addition, in practice many practitioners are not taking the children's voices into account (Together, 2010).

Particularly, the 2014 Act has given the inter-agency approach in children's services status and also a statutory role for the Named Person. The latter has resulted in critiques from civil society organisations such as the Scottish Parent Teacher Council, Schoolhouse Home Education Association, The Law Society of Scotland, Autism Rights, and Faculty of Advocates (Christian Institute, 2014). These organisations perceive that the Named Person scheme is undermining parental authority and is intrusive towards family life.

In the midst of the ongoing debate on the Named Person, organisational changes that are required to implement GIRFEC have received little attention. Yet each organisation involved, either the Local Authority or school or health board, has to manage the changes, while at the same time ensuring that services are still being delivered. Along with this they need to develop ways of working collaboratively with other agencies in the multi-agency context with all the inherent problems of inter-agency working.

1.3.2. Why GIRFEC implementation and Named Person are a suitable context for exploring inter-agency working

As the Scottish Government is committed to its public service reforms (see Scottish Executive, 2001; Scottish Government, 2011), the Local Authorities are now being challenged to continue with the progressive, but fluid, development of GIRFEC. The fluidity of GIRFEC's development is due to the different approaches, results and progress each Local Authority has made in implementing GIRFEC (Coles et al., 2016; Education Scotland, 2012). In the spotlight are the frontline workers who must

adapt to the changes that the implementation of GIRFEC brings into their agencies, and into their own work. The Highland pathfinder programme (2006-2009), which looked at how Highland's children services built on existing good practice to enable the early implementation of GIRFEC (Scottish Government, 2009), suggests that what works for the practitioners includes, "knowing where their responsibilities begin and end, articulating their worries about implementation, and recognising how colleagues across different agencies experience their practice differently" (Scottish Government, 2010b, p13). Therefore, as part of the implementation of GIRFEC, the Named Person roles need to be clear in relation to the professionals own remit (e.g. head/guidance teachers, health visitors) and the remit of others.

The Scottish Government (2010a) writes, "the *Named Person* is proving to be significant in furthering the *Getting it right for every child* aim of using early intervention effectively to improve outcomes for children who have additional needs" (p10). Their claim is based on the Highland Pathfinder experience which found that the role of the Named Person is important in identifying children's needs at an earlier stage (Scottish Government, 2010b, p9). Taking into account the importance of the limit of professionals' responsibility that the Highland Pathfinder programme has found, the claim demands a scrutiny.

The implementation of GIRFEC and its Named Person provision have thus provided an ideal context for me to explore and understand more about inter-agency working processes in children's services.

1.3.3. *The key focus of my research*

My research aimed to explore how professionals work together to implement *Getting it right for every child* (GIRFEC), for the purpose of understanding the processes of inter-agency working in Scotland's children's services. However, the purpose of the research evolved during the research process. The early focus on the Named Person met with a challenge at the beginning of my fieldwork because the research participants were reluctant to talk about it and perceived it as a statutory role that would not happen until the then deadline of August 2016. Instead, I focussed on the mechanisms of inter-agency working. This means that I followed information processes that led me to identify key informants for understanding what professionals do when they work together with other professionals. When later on in my fieldwork the Named Person was more discussed, I was then able to connect the work of the professionals who were going to be the Named Person with other professionals from other agencies.

As engagement with the literature continued and as the analysis developed, the working relations of Named Person professionals with other professionals were scrutinised under the concept of *ruling relations*. The concept allowed me to unpack the complexities of information processes and unintended implications of inter-agency meetings, referral processes and forms for promoted teachers who are going to be the Named Person. What the Named Person does when they work together with other professionals was best understood through looking at the formalisation of procedures of inter-agency working as part of GIRFEC implementation.

1.4. Definition of specific terms

This thesis uses many acronyms or specialist terms. Throughout the thesis, acronyms are given their full description when being introduced and also in the “List of Acronyms and Abbreviations” (on page xiv). However, explanation of some of the terminologies are useful at the outset:

- GIRFEC stands for *Getting It Right For Every Child*; however, it has become an acronym itself. It is the Scottish Government’s overarching framework for delivering children’s services. It is enshrined in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.
- Inter-agency working is a broad term that encompasses different activities under terminologies such as partnership, collaboration and coordination. Literature related to professionals’ working together in public services are often found within the discourse of ‘inter-agency working’, which is the term that is primarily used in this thesis. “Agency” is primarily used in this thesis to describe organisations or department *within* the Local Authority that provide services for children and families. In this thesis, particular agencies that I talked most about are part of Ballian Local Authority: Children and Families Team, which was part of Social Work department of Ballian Local Authority, and Schools, which was under the oversight of Education department of the Local Authority. Although these agencies were within one overall governance structure, the local authority, they functioned with sufficient separation of systems, identity and management that merited their consideration as inter-agency. There were also examples where agencies outwith the Local Authority – like the police – were part of the study. Chapter

2 of this thesis discusses in length the problems of terminologies that are used to understand the ways in which practitioners work together. My review has indicated that inter-agency working entails working arrangements and relationships (both formal and informal) among different agencies. These arrangements and relationships are built through actions, such as the communication and the sharing of information within the agencies.

- “Bureaucracy” refers to complex administrative procedures as the way to organise people who work together. This is influenced by Weber’s conceptualisation of bureaucracy as “formalised administrative domination through a system of depersonalised rules, offices, procedures and sense of duty, justified on rational and legalistic grounds” (Hearn, 2012, p56).
- The word “service” in this thesis, such as in “children’s services”, refers to a system of support provided by agencies to help address the needs of children and families (service users). This usually entailed practitioners working with children and families to identify their needs, the best ways to support them and then to provide such support.
- “Professional judgement” is used here to describe the process of forming an opinion in a professional setting based on knowledge, expertise and experience.
- “Professionals” refers to any practitioner working in an organisation that was represented in the meetings I observed and/or referred to in the meetings or referral forms. As the methodology chapter discusses, I encountered many different professionals from different organisations with many different job titles, such as: Children and Families Team Leader, Head Teacher, Deputy

Head Teacher, Health Visitor Team Manager, and GIRFEC Development Officer. Occasionally I also use “frontline” to encompass these professionals’ roles in the frontline of inter-agency working practice. Although, some of them are team leaders and managers, the input from the frontline (of services) was often indirect. For example, a Children and Families Team Leader would have brought a report from the family support worker who actually worked with the child/family to the Locality Forum meeting.

- “Promoted teachers” are teachers in promoted posts, usually in senior management teams and leadership roles. They include guidance teachers, head teachers, depute head teachers, and principal teachers.
- Although this thesis is not focussing on “early intervention”, this terminology is worthy of an explanation for two reasons. Firstly, some discussions about meetings (especially in Chapter 5) were placed in the context of early intervention by my informants and secondly, the Scottish Government (2008) claims that GIRFEC is “founded on the principles of early intervention” (p8). Behind ‘early intervention’ is an idea that focusses on tackling problems early to give children and families a better chance of success in the future (Pithouse, 2008). As such it is also shaping organisational discourse that justifies suitability of services and the timing of their delivery.
- As with “early intervention”, this thesis is not focussing on “social work”. However, this terminology deserves an explanation because some discussions about professionals’ roles in this thesis are discussed in the social work literature. Defining ‘social work’ has been largely done in reference to the social work profession that is registered and accredited (Cree, 2008). As such,

in the last decade it has become a product of massive organisational change and technological advancement, with the practice taking place in a multi-agency context (Cree, 2008). Drawing from elements of “social work” as a profession (e.g. Cree, 2008; Payne, 2006; Scottish Executive, 2006), key features of ‘social work’ include building relationships with service users, not working in isolation as the complexity of service users’ lives are recognised, along with being person-centred and governed by the principles of human rights and social justice.

- “Named Person” may refer to a *person* or the *service*. In Chapter 6 and 7 I use “Named *Person*” (the word Person is italicised) to refer to the *person* who carries out the role of the Named Person) and “Named Person *service*” to refer to the Named Person as a *service*. As it stands, apart from in legal documents, “Named Person” often refers to a *person*. For example, the Scottish Government website³ on Named Person talks primarily of a *person*. As such, it is a professional with responsibility to ensure children are getting the help or services needed to promote their wellbeing. For most children, that person would be a health visitor or a head/guidance teacher. The role is enshrined in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. However, due to the UK Supreme Court Judgement in July 2016, the Scottish Government has had to delay the implementation of this provision and amend its legal duties to meet the Supreme Court decisions. At the time of writing, the Scottish Government has just published (20th June 2017) their

³ <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright/named-person>. Accessed on 11th July 2017.

amendments in “The Children and Young People (Information Sharing) (Scotland) Bill” along with its accompanying documents⁴.

1.5. Structure of the thesis

In this first chapter I began by giving an overview of my journey towards the topic of my doctoral research. I have introduced the research topic, the policy context in Scotland’s children services and the terminologies used in this thesis. The next chapter, Chapter Two, is my review of the literature on inter-agency working and more in depth discussion on the *Getting it right for every child* policy. The chapter starts with an overview of inter-agency working. The review shows problems in understanding inter-agency working due to the terminological quagmire’ and ‘definitional chaos’. It is then followed by explaining GIRFEC as the focus of the Scottish Government’s children’s services reform and elaborates its implications for children’s services, particularly for inter-agency working mechanisms, before concluding with an overview of the Named Person provision.

Chapter Three opens with my research aim and questions, which is then followed by discussing how I used institutional ethnography to investigate inter-agency working processes in children’s services. The chapter also outlines the research design and the rationale for how certain choices about methods and fieldwork decisions were made. In this chapter I introduce my research settings and the research informants. I discuss challenges during my fieldwork and the ethical and practical ways I chose to deal

⁴ The Bill can be accessed here: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright/information-sharing/cyp-information-sharing-bill-2017>. Accessed on 11th July 2017

with them. In the last part of the chapter I explain how the data was generated and analysed.

Chapter Four identifies professionals who play key roles in attaining, storing and sharing information about children and young people. The chapter explores the process of making and sharing of information that involved the professionals' judgements and database systems. In so doing, the chapter reveals how the relationship between schools and the Children and Families team is organised.

Chapter Five explores "ruling relations" in respect to the organised ways in which information was collected, discussed and used. The chapter extends the discussion on the relationship between schools and the Children and Families team by exploring the use and procedures of the Pupil Referral Group and the Locality Forum meetings and referral forms. The exploration has a two-fold benefit. First, it cemented my argument that the professionals' work was coordinated bureaucratically. Second, it revealed an unintended implication of the meetings, namely that they became a space for professionals to talk about uncertainties of information and their practice.

Chapter Six specifically discusses the Named Person further. Building on the previous discussions on the Named Person roles in Chapter Four and Five, this chapter provides justification for understanding the Named Person as both a *person* and a *service*. The introduction of the Named Person policy affected the promoted teachers' confidence and changed the way in which a school and the Children and Families team worked together. Certain elements of the policy, such as the introduction of new Wellbeing Concerns Forms, have created additional work for the professionals in both settings. Therefore, by discussing these changes, the chapter

provides cautionary analysis on the policy claim that “head teachers and guidance/pupil support teachers are already carrying out many aspects of the Named Person role as part of their day-to-day work” (Scottish Government, 2014a, p2).

Chapter Seven summarises how each research question has been answered. The chapter draws out what the research adds to knowledge by showing that while GIRFEC policy encourages professionals to work together to deliver better support and timely intervention for children and families, the professionals’ engagement in inter-agency working processes has also encouraged professional learning that has led to a growth in confidence through support from other professionals.

The chapter also discusses my reflections on using ‘institutional ethnography’ where I show how my research contributes to the ever changing policies of children’s services in which inter-agency working is still required. Finally, some recommendations for future research form the coda of this thesis.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

This chapter begins with a review on the inter-agency working literature to differentiate the terminologies used in the literature and to discuss the problems when professionals work together. It includes a discussion about information sharing practices as one of the traits of working together. This chapter also connects issues of power in research to people and organisations. Particularly interesting is the concept of *ruling relations*, which problematises the seemingly mundane practices of professionals (such as attending a meeting) to uncover the ways in which policy and procedures shape professionals' work.

Terminologies around the idea of 'working together' are many and often overlapping. The idea has been used in various disciplines, for example health, education and social work and there is no unified understanding of its meaning. One prominent terminological device that I will use in this thesis is *inter-agency working*. This chapter reviews the literature around inter-agency working and social work to identify gaps in researching inter-agency working in the context of children's services.

This chapter does not attempt to conceptualise inter-agency working. Instead, it establishes the key concepts in literature, in which 'working together' is discussed. The chapter also discusses the tensions and gaps to which my research can contribute. Particularly, the tensions around structural enablers for 'successful' inter-agency working at the frontline; exercising professional judgement within the prescribed procedures of information sharing that make use of IT systems; managing

uncertain situations at the frontline and conceptualisation of children and families' problems (e.g. risk, need and wellbeing). The gap is what happens in inter-agency working that leads to professional learning.

Section 2.4 frames my research and identify themes that foreground the discussion on the *Getting it right for every child* (GIRFEC) policy, the central policy context of my research. The section discusses GIRFEC in the context of 'early intervention' and its agenda on 'minimising bureaucracy', then moves to discuss challenges in implementing GIRFEC. The last part of this section examines the Named Person scheme in policy and literature. The chapter concludes with the statement of research questions for this study.

2.2. Inter-agency working and Information sharing

This section first discusses how inter-agency working has been researched and conceptualised in the literature, followed by analysis regarding information sharing as one of the characteristics of inter-agency working.

2.2.1. The terminologies of inter-agency working

This sub-section discusses the terminologies that are often used alongside or interchangeably with *inter-agency working*. As such, what is important is not how the terms are used, but rather to what each term refers, shedding light on the problems created by mis-use. Before doing so, I need to distinguish between *inter-agency* and *inter-professional*. While *inter-agency* refers to organisations rather than people within the organisations, *inter-professional* refers to working relationships between professionals across different professional groups, such as between teachers and social workers. As these professionals are also working for organisations,

therefore, talking about inter-agency working cannot exclude the role of these professionals in the process. However, I argue that their role in working together is a conduit to understand inter-agency working. This argument is influenced by the tenets of IE, which will be discussed in the next section.

“Inter-agency work” is used often in literature but not completely understood: there have been many attempts to unpack it. It is also used in many contexts, for example, my review of the literature shows that concepts of partnership, collaboration and coordination have been largely explored in Health and Social Care. Also, the problem in clarifying terminologies related to inter-agency working is found not only in universal settings, such as health and education, but also in specialised setting, such as transition to mainstream school for children with disabilities (Davis et al., 2015). The study also highlights that the terminological quagmire in understanding ‘integration’ is even more complex when taking into account countries’ variation. Similarly, literature about inter-agency working in children’s services (i.e. Statham, 2011) also notes the various dimensions of ‘inter-agency working’ as wide range variables that brings challenges for reviewing international evidence.

Research and reviews conducted in the UK have focussed on identifying the challenges (e.g. Woodhouse and Pengelly, 1991; Ranade and Hudson, 2003) and/or the successes (e.g. Glaister and Glaister, 2005) of the term, reviewing the definitions of terminologies related to working together (e.g. Hallett and Birchall, 1992; Wilson and Pirrie, 2000; Percy-Smith, 2005) and unpacking its dimension/layers (e.g. Hudson, 1987; Horwath and Morrison, 2007). I hope here to shed light on the ‘terminological quagmire’ (Leathard, 1994, p5), and avoid ‘definitional chaos’ (Ling, 2000, p83).

“Inter-agency collaboration is defined as activities by agencies intended to increase public values by having the agencies working together rather than separately”

(Bardach, 1998, p17). Bardach (1998) argues that inter-agency collaboration is a long, complex, developmental process. “Collaboration” represents the kind of activities involved, while “inter-agency” points to those performing the activities. Hudson (2000) claims that *collaboration* is often seen as both the problem and the solution for working together: a paradox. In spite of the ongoing recognition by governments on the importance of public services working together, he argues that policies in this area tend to be lukewarm.

Integration refers to a fusion of services (see for example Pirrie et al., 1998; Davis, 2011). Integration and collaboration can be defined differently, as the former requires formal actions and clear structures, while the latter entails voluntary actions (Hallett and Birchall, 1992; Percy-Smith, 2005; Packard et al., 2013). Davis (2011) argues that integrated working is an ‘ongoing activity’ that does not take place in a vacuum. As such, to grasp the idea of integration requires an understanding of the multi-dimensional aspect of relationships: between workers; between workers and targets of the activity (i.e. consumers, clients, patients, parents, students or children); and with an awareness of the social and political context that influences and is influenced by the activity.

Characteristics of integrated services include: unified management systems; whole systems approach (i.e. different agencies working together for a shared goal, where there is a clear mandate or agreement to collaborate, and where there is joint decision-making and responsibility for funding and resources); and single assessment and shared targets (Horwath and Morrison, 2007). An example of integration in

Scotland's children services was the New Community Schools (NCS) initiative, which was launched in 1998 to promote integration between education and other social services. NCS was a Scottish then-Executive initiative, which was driven by modernising agenda aiming to promote social inclusion and at the same time raise attainment and improve children's health. The initiative identified working together is the way forward for the delivery of public services (Riddel and Tett, 2004). To this end, it has been recognised as encouraging learning for professionals who were involved and led to informal processes of professional development (McCulloch et al., 2004, p135).

Similarly, in the context of school-based inter-agency working, Lloyd and colleagues (2001) found that inter-agency work assists in providing a child-centred integrated service, a supportive space for professionals to discuss opinions and encourage ideas, and it widens awareness of other strategies and resources outside school. However, organisational differences, for example in administrative processes (McCulloch et al., 2004), coupled with the scope of complexities of families' problems (Tisdall et al., 2005), can make inter-agency working challenging.

Perhaps a terminology that offers simpler definition is *multi-agency* working, which refers to more than one agency being involved. However, this does not imply a shared and common way of working together between the agencies (Wilson and Pirrie, 2000). On the contrary, Jones and Leverett (2008) state that multi-agency working is an evolving process of communication and negotiation between professionals, occupations, agencies and disciplines.

Coordination has been used to represent formal actions of integration to realise stated goals (Packard et al., 2013). However, the meaning of coordination is unclear (Hallett and Birchall, 1992). Several authors conclude that “coordination” is a formal way of interaction (Horwath and Morrison, 2007; Percy-Smith, 2005). In comparison to collaboration, Davis (2011) perceives coordination to be more systematic, examples including forums or locality groups that pay attention to various service elements such as “boundaries (structures), planning cycles (procedures) and funding/resources (finances)” (p16). According to Nylén (2007), the word ‘coordination’ implies information exchange.

Ling (2002) argues that *partnership* entails working mechanisms between agencies involved. There is a shared agenda, however each agency maintains its own identity and goals. The shared agenda is a result of formalised relationships between the agencies (see Percy-Smith, 2006). An analysis into partnership working between public services in Scotland suggests that partnership working has not been proven effective on a large scale (Eccles, 2012). Unfortunately, the political tendency is to enforce this mode of inter-agency working, regardless of frontline workers and operational managers’ opinions. Furthermore, although inter-agency working in children’s services may not guarantee better outcomes for children, the idea continues to flourish in Scotland.

Below, I attempt to highlight the strong characteristics and elements of each terminology for the sake of this research. It is not meant to be a precise division because, as I have briefly discussed, the elements are overlapping and the literature is not definitive in conceptualising inter-agency working.

Table 1. Terminologies often used to represent inter-agency working

Terminology	Definition	How it is used with Inter-agency working
Integration	A unification of formal or made-formal actions, which may entail the use of a single-shared strategy (Packard et al., 2013).	Inter-agency refers to a relationship between agencies and services, while integration refers to a merging of services (e.g. Pirrie et al., 1998; Davis, 2011).
Collaboration	Entails voluntary actions (Packard et al., 2013); more informal (Hallett and Birchall, 1992).	Used in conjunction with “inter-agency collaboration” (e.g. Bardach, 1998; Packard et al., 2013).
	Complex concept because it can describe a range of inter-agency working arrangements (Horwath and Morrison, 2007).	
Coordination	Some use it interchangeably with collaboration (Hallett and Birchall, 1992); shared common aim, with combined approach to achieve objectives that can be achieved effectively by working together.	Represents the type of relationship between agencies working together. This type can be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal • Informal • Subjective/open to interpretation of the actors
	Some says it is a formalised type of cooperation (Hallett and Birchall, 1992).	
Multi-agency	More than two organisations/ professionals (Wilson and Pirrie, 2000)	Between two organisations/ professionals
	More than numbers, involving intricate negotiation and communication process (e.g. Jones and Leverett, 2008; Wilson and Pirrie, 2000)	More complex than inter-agency, implies integration (e.g. procedures of working) and shared information (e.g. Pirrie et al., 1998)

Partnership	Collaborative working (e.g. Eccles, 2012)	Used interchangeably with collaboration (e.g. Eccles, 2012)
	Implies the mechanism of two or more organisations working together on a shared agenda but each maintaining their own identity and goals (Ling, 2002).	Used to represent the elements (e.g. relationship, boundaries, scale) of agencies working together (e.g. Eccles, 2012)

My review indicates that inter-agency working entails working arrangements and relationships (both formal and informal) among and between different agencies.

These arrangements and relationships are built through actions, such as communication and the sharing of information within and between the agencies. In other words, implicit in the terms are clues of how organised processes, management or bureaucracy (i.e. elements of organisational life) influence the relationship between the participants, and of power relations (see Glasby and Dickinson, 2014).

2.2.2. Inter-agency working: problems, benefits and approaches

There have been many studies on inter-agency working, some highlight the problems (e.g. Hudson, 1987; Bardach, 1998; Lowndes and Skelcher, 1998; Glasby and Dickinson, 2014) and others consider the benefits (e.g. Douglas and Philpot, 1998; Hill, 2012). The problems include differences in: organisational structure, work culture among professionals, professionals' judgement and perception towards working together. Meanwhile, the benefits include shared responsibility and goal as well as practice innovation.

It is important to question the assumption that inter-agency working is a 'good thing'. This is because too often it overlooks complexities and learning processes, focussing too much on barriers (e.g. different organisational structures or no clear

strategy to encourage collaborative working) and enablers (e.g. good communication between professionals or joint training) (Warmington et al., 2004). Douglas and Philpot (1998) conclude that working together among agencies is not straightforward, but when it does work, its impact is invaluable against the backdrop of a fragmented world of welfare services. Unfortunately, most policies on inter-agency working focus on prescriptions and not innovations. In other words, these policies may address, for example, structural changes, the formation of commission groups or the number of agencies involved, but not the ways in which collaboration can be more effective (Warmington et al., 2004).

In practice, it has been acknowledged that practitioners have the final call in delivering services to their clients (Breachin, 2000). No matter what the policies are, the path of practice does not rely much on rational behaviours (e.g. past experience, strategies). Rather, it is more of a social process: “belief systems and cultural style may have a powerful impact on practice” (Breachin, 2000, p43). Successful examples of inter-agency working can be found on the frontline, where service providers are dealing with service users on a day-to-day basis (Davis and Smith, 2012; Douglas and Philpot, 1998; Foley and Rixon, 2008). People on the frontline may not consider policies much, resulting in a general irrelevance of the policies for frontline workers in their day-to-day practice (Davies, 2000). However, the 2010 Social Work Task Force reports that frontline practice is shaped by public policies; it is where all changes in public service reforms come together (Munro, 2010).

The frontline workers also work within organisations with established systems (e.g. budgeting systems, specific organisational structures). These systems usually differ from one organisation to the other, which can create problems when different

organisations have to work together (Hudson, 2007). These problems range from the fundamental to the relational, from the well-established nature of each organisation to the working mechanisms between agencies and people. Agencies' decision-making processes, budget management and corporate culture need to be negotiated when working together. This is because the difference in organisational structure, culture and practice can cause competing autonomies.

The possibility of a widened agenda instead of shared one (Glaister and Glaister, 2005) is another identified problem when organisations come to work together. In addition, the internal agendas of each organisation (Douglas and Philpot, 1998) may hinder a key component of success in relation to inter-agency working: a shared goal.

Between individuals, the problems of inter-agency working manifest themselves differently. Douglas and Philpot (1998) note that "working together has to start at the top" (p208), meaning between the managers and directors, although they add that this does not guarantee successful inter-agency cooperation. Inter-professional differences in paradigms and practices can pose further challenges (Hudson, 2007). One professional group may see the other group as 'less' important, or perceive working together with other professional as a threat to their job (Douglas and Philpot, 1998, p209).

In spite of the existing problems, possible solutions for better working together relations are continually proposed. If competing goals is one of the problems, the solution may start with knowing the goals of the other agency (see Polivka et al., 2001). There are other solutions to problems of inter-agency working that are often mentioned in the literature, for example increasing the quality of coordination, better

communication, informal relationships, formalised coalition structure, shared budgets and clear responsibilities (Douglas and Philpot, 1998; Polivka et al., 2001).

Some like formal partnership collaboration, while others prefer informal procedures (Lowndes and Skelcher, 1998). Informality is characterised by relaxed interaction between practitioners and communicating at a personal level, which Robinson et al. (2005) denote as “coffee and corridor chats” (p182). Such activities allow professionals to learn about their own practices as well as others’ (Freeman, 2008).

In discussing the problems and solutions for inter-agency working, literature has incorporated many theories. One of them is *activity theory*, which has been conceptually useful in looking at inter-agency working from the perspective of professionals (see Warmington et al., 2004). Activity theory focusses on what professionals do and their perceptions regarding what can be achieved from working together with other professionals and clients (Warmington et al., 2004, p5). In so doing, the theory encourages innovative methods, and professionals’ learning beyond their practice. Using a multi-agency panel in children’s services as an example of an established practice can be helpful here because, as Walker (2008) argues, a multi-agency panel is an avenue for professionals to share experiences but maintain their membership to their home agency. However, activity theory lacks an analysis tool for *processes* that lead to innovative practices and professionals’ continued learning (Warmington et al., 2004).

Alter and Hage (1993) developed a system/network analysis to analyse collaborative multi-organisational partnerships. Their analysis focusses on multi-layered agreements among different organisations that band together to produce a single

product (Baumann and Gulati, 1994, p355). For example, Child Protection Services is a product of a network of organisations working together, which is characterised by a changing structure and joint decision-making.

Lowndes and Skelcher (1998) argue that a “network” is one way of running organisations’ working together, but that this alone is not sufficient to fully understand multi-organisational partnerships. Instead, they argue that “market and hierarchical arrangements as well as networking are apparent in partnerships” (p314). Bardach (1988) noted that networks manifest themselves in various forms of relationships, some formal and others informal, but the participants in this network theory are organisations. Therefore, this theory is limited in its ability to uncover what is under the visible activities of collaboration at the frontline.

At the organisational level, an example of an inter-agency working model is provided by Polivka and colleagues (2001), who developed and tested an “Inter-agency Collaboration Model”, which describes and analyses factors in the collaboration. The model is made-up of five concepts (i.e. environmental factors, situational factors, task characteristics, inter-agency processes and outcomes) that the authors list as vital to inter-agency collaboration. The concepts are drawn from the works of other scholars as well as their previous work. Tested in a rigorous quantitative study with practitioners (see Polivka et al., 2001), the model indicates that environmental and situational factors affect the inter-agency process the most. However, the model was not designed to explain *why* or *how* the practitioners made use of the factors in ways that encouraged inter-agency working. This study adopted a narrow systemic approach that focusses only on managerial or technological ‘barriers’ to effective inter-agency collaboration (Warmington et al., 2004).

Despite criticism to Polivka and colleagues' (2001) study, their review does note the benefit of knowing staff from other agencies in the context of partnership working. At an individual level, playing the 'generic care worker' – one who is flexible enough to meet the needs of service users – has proven to be effective in Health and Social Care integration settings (e.g. Poxton, 1997). This does not mean there is a single type of 'generic' worker. Instead, the emphasis here is on *flexibility*, which entails close working between services that results in a mixed model of services, able to meet the demands of service users.

To conclude, predominantly inter-agency working is studied from an organisational, system/network analysis level, and a prescribed policy analysis point of view.

Although there are studies that problematise inter-agency working by focussing on the experience of practitioners to provide a framework in the exploration of inter-agency working (e.g. Polivka et al. 2001; Packard et al., 2013), these studies bring together established concepts in literature as the basis for their exploration. What is lacking then is research that starts with the experiences of professionals at the frontline of inter-agency working. In other words, what actually happens in inter-agency settings that leads to professionals' learning process is under-explored (Warmington et al., 2004). As professionals interact much when they share information, looking at this process may reveal professionals' learning process. The following section elaborates the sharing of information as one of the main tenets of inter-agency working.

2.2.3. Information and information sharing

Working together entails information sharing. In the literature, the problem of sharing information has been listed as one of the main challenges in multi-agency

working (e.g. NSPCC and SCIE, 2016; Robinson et al., 2005). Especially in child protection discourse, it has been considered as a key to success, the lack thereof is the predominant reason for failure to safeguard children (Thompson, 2016).

Information is not easy to define (Martin, 1995; Thompson, 2016), and is often understood in relation to activities, such as information sharing (Thompson, 2016; Walker, 2008) and communication (Martin, 1995). In these kinds of activities something is transferred, for example, from one person to another, from one computer to another. Often, what is transferred is regarded simply as ‘information’. Additionally, information is relational; it changes when a person’s relationship to the information changes and it is context-dependant (Lawler and Bilson, 2010).

Information about children and families is instable and dynamic. Policies tend to stress the importance of having a ‘full’ picture of children and families (see for example Department for Education, 2015; Scottish Government, 2014b) as key to successful support and intervention. This is often followed by tasking professionals to work with other agencies in information seeking. However, Thompson (2016) challenges the idea of achieving a ‘full’ picture in child protection discourse through multi-agency work, yet in recent years this idea has been driving the UK’s policy and guidance on child protection. This idea assumes that assemblages of information that professionals hold about a child will result in a complete picture. Thompson notes the main problem with the idea of achieving a ‘full’ picture is because children’s lives are messy and complex. Nevertheless, from the perspective of holistic approach, during a child’s life-span, children’s services need to address the child’s needs within their family and wider community, which requires different services to work together.

One of the complexities in information sharing involves record keeping. Record keeping in social work suggests that accountability and good practice are positively correlated with the growing emphasis on partnership working (Prince, 1996). Ling (2002) argues that accountability is difficult in inter-agency working because sharing (usually information sharing) is one of its characteristics. The challenge is to reconcile between what information is shared and how the organisation's accountability can be made clear in that process. One of the examples where accountability can be a problem is when a professional needs to make a decision regarding whether or not information about their client should be shared to a professional working in a different organisation.

Assessing the confidential nature of information would influence decision-making (Walker, 2008). However, despite many guidelines and regulations (e.g. Data Protection Act 1998), information sharing is challenging. In children's services, different procedures and standards cloud the situation (Walker, 2008). Anning and colleagues (2010) argue that such difficulties are caused by the different codes of conduct and attitudes towards information sharing. Other than government regulation on information sharing and organisation-specific procedures that professionals must comply with, professionals must navigate these prescriptions when they work with professionals from different agencies and with their service users.

An issue identified in mapping inter-professional communication in the process of assessing information about families is that services have different administrative and IT systems (NSPCC and SCIE, 2016). This issue indicates how information systems can be problematic in inter-agency working; the differing systems hamper communication between agencies.

In the context of multi-agency working, technology can be an enabler in “the sharing of information, practices and resources” (Davis et al., 2016, p134). However for this to happen, the structure of technology must be enabling. The ‘structure’ here refers to inter-organisational processes and organisational frameworks that allow a participative approach by all stakeholders (i.e. service users and service providers). Structures and procedures can then be traced to policies. In recent years, policies around information sharing in children’s services have emphasised the use of technology to improve information sharing between professionals (Munro, 2005). In the literature, such policy emphasis has been linked to information sharing problems in child abuse inquiries (see Munro, 2005, Thompson, 2016).

The use of technology in recording and sharing information also requires filtering work. Information can go missing in the process, as professionals struggle to ‘fit’ necessary information into available columns or categories (Thompson, 2016), such as ‘significant harm’ (Wattam, 1997) or ‘wellbeing concerns’. This filtering process serves as an institutional requirement or procedure rather than reflecting on actual levels of concern in which meaningful support can be directed (Wattam, 1997).

Professionals can over-rely on technology and their dependency upon technology can affect their judgement. Garrett (2005) and Munro (2005) argue that there is a shift in social workers’ efforts into more procedural compliance, which involves information, communication and technology (ICT), than a reliance on professionals’ judgement. Munro (2005) argues that this shift is ineffective because it takes for granted professionals’ competence of working with new computerised systems, and overlooks the actual ‘tool’ that professionals use to share information: their

judgement. Professionals' judgement in assessing, discerning, reading and interpreting information is vital to effective information sharing (Munro, 2005).

Improving professionals' ability to make sound judgements regarding children's lives by reducing prescribed procedures has been advocated in reviews on child protection (Munro, 2011). Lawler and Bilson (2010), in their explanation of why it is problematic to use a systemic approach to understand organisations, suggest that organisations are fundamentally made of human beings. As such, they are proponents of Gareth Morgan's metaphor that organisations are akin to living organisms: adaptive to dynamic policy changes in public services (Digha, 2014). Suggesting that organisations should be approached pragmatically, Weick (1995) argues that confidence is an important factor for professionals to adapt and create enabling environments in the midst of uncertainty.

In everyday practice, frontline practitioners are "operating within a context of potentially competing discourses of need, risk and wellbeing" (Coles et al., 2016).

An example of this can be found in a study that explored the UK's school counsellors' perceptions regarding confidentiality and information sharing. A study conducted by Jenkins and Palmer (2012), found that school counsellors' decisions to disclose information that the pupils had told them was complicated by the concept of risk: "the counsellor's perception of risk to a young person may be framed by a narrow spectrum of child abuse (neglect, physical, sexual or emotional abuse, domestic violence), or by a wider discourse of safeguarding (bullying, health and safety, female genital mutilation and forced marriage)" (p555). The latter reason suggests how a counsellor's understanding of risk may be conflated with wellbeing.

In spite of the different concepts that professionals have to constantly negotiate, collecting relevant information so that a professional can have better judgement and make appropriate use of their skills is paramount when working with children and families. In fact, professionals such as health visitors (see Hobbs and Wynne, 2002) and guidance teachers (see Jenkins and Palmer, 2012) do this on a daily basis.

Therefore, professionals who work with different systems and may be using different ‘language’ must find ways to share information effectively when they work together.

There are complexities surrounding the process of sharing information. The complexities can be found in investigating the structural or organisational framework (Davis et al., 2016) and formalisation of procedures (Nylén, 2007); they are key to understanding how information sharing works. Moreover, looking at these organisational aspects may lead to the revealing of power relations. As Morrison (1996) states, “information is power and sharing it symbolises some ceding of autonomy” (p130).

2.2.4. Section conclusion

This section has provided an overview of problems in inter-agency working and in research around it. It has reviewed the different terminologies used alongside “inter-agency” and has shown how those terminologies can overlap. As many studies focus on outcomes and elements that make up successful or failed inter-agency working initiatives, this section has identified a gap in literature, which this thesis attends to: the need for professionals bottom-up focus to understand the complexities of inter-agency working processes.

The section has also discussed the tensions in exercising professional judgement within the prescribed procedures of information sharing. With different organisational procedures, information sharing can be problematic in multi-professional settings. Problems identified include the use of computer technology. As such, this section has discussed key considerations for the study of inter-agency working processes in children's services: professionals' engagement with technology in sharing information and the balancing of professional judgement with procedures and systems that formalise inter-agency working.

2.3. Revealing power relations in policy processes

Working together is often offered as a solution to the problems caused by bureaucratic power (Glasby and Dickinson, 2014). However, working with other agencies does not eliminate power relations between agencies. Instead, partnership working changes the power relations between organisations (Lowndes and Skelcher, 1998). My research took into account not only hierarchical and vertical power, as would be the focus of in-organisation analysis, but also horizontal power, i.e. relationships between organisations.

Hudson (1987) suggests that a successful inter-agency working "remains a job for talented practitioners" (p182). The practitioners are influenced by things happening beyond their day-to-day practice, referred to as extra local forms of social organisations (e.g. the governance of Child Protection System) (de Montigny, 1995). In the context of social work, de Montigny (1995) suggests that social workers should question their judgements both with regard to their own practice and their organisations' practice. "Questioning" means recognising how clients' best interests

shape judgements, while at the same time recognising the power relations that influence the social workers' (professionals') work.

In his analytical review on studies about power, Hearn (2012) found that narrow understanding of power is grouped into 'power *over* something or people', and 'power *to do* something'. There is also a perception that power is attached to people (Hearn, 2012), it is about exercising control or authority; this may mean control over information. In understanding how organisations work, power can be seen as the legitimisation of senior management to empower or value people, and create effective communication (see Lawler and Bilson, 2010). Power is seen as something that connects people's actions. Lawler and Bilson (2010) argue that "the issue of power relates directly to our principles of respect and responsibility" (p177).

If power is embedded in relations, then a way to understand how it works is by tracing the flow or connection between people and organisations. Hearn (2012), in his analysis of Foucault and Latour, notes that these scholars perceive power as relational (i.e. organised and hierarchical), and suggest that power travels and disperses, creating a direction of flow. This idea is also embraced by Lawler and Bilson (2010), who perceive power as entrenched in relationships between people in an organisation (Lawler and Bilson, 2010, p107).

Extending this to inter-agency context, thus structures and procedures in organisations need to be taken into account when investigating power relations. As professionals engage in formal inter-agency work settings (e.g. local forums or referral processes), they constantly negotiate different sets of procedures and structures from each organisation. Striking a balance in this situation can also reveal

power relations. Indeed, power is embedded in these professionals' day-to-day work and in their own organisational procedures of processing information (Buchanan and Badham, 2008).

2.3.1. Conceptualisations of power in studies of bureaucracy and organisations

This section focusses on conceptualisations of power, within studies of bureaucracy and organisational power generally and social work in particular. I discuss how the work of Weber on *domination*, central to organisational studies, can be extended through making links with Foucault's concept of *power* as decentred and operating through social relations. This can be seen in Dorothy Smith's formulation of *ruling relations* as the core concept of Institutional Ethnography.

Weber is interested in bureaucracy (Sadan, 2004) and considers it a product of successful technical functioning that regards rational calculation as the main motivation. Thus bureaucracy is a form of effective *rationalisation*. Here, rationalisation refers to a process in which values or traditions are replaced by rational and measured motivations (Clegg, 1994). The efficient function of bureaucracy entails depersonalisation of roles within the organisation.

Weber's critical view of bureaucracy has been noted as his contribution to understanding power in organisations (see for example, Buchanan and Badham, 2008; Hearn, 2012). In bureaucracies, power is operating through organisational hierarchies and sets of regulations. Those who interpret Weber's work suggest that he sees power as a factor for domination (Sadan, 2004). For example, Hearn (2012) argues that Weber thinks the term power (*Macht*) is too broad to be useful (p29), and Weber is more interested in domination (*Herrschaft*) as the form of power which

implies compliance. Weber's *domination* is, therefore, relevant to understanding how power works in organisations. Weber's work considers bureaucracy as "formalised administrative domination through a system of depersonalised rules, offices, procedures and sense of duty, justified on rational and legalistic grounds" (Hearn, 2012, p56). In this context, *domination*, as a form of power, involves securing compliance through the hierarchical structure of an organisation. This form of power works vertically in a formalised and organised setting in which those with authority govern.

Based on Weber's work (alongside Marx and Durkheim), power has been understood as a property of a system and not embedded as qualities of individuals or relations (Hearn, 2012). Weber warns that modernity produces 'iron cage' bureaucracies, which leads to increasing depersonalisation that, in turn, may lead to disenchantment; that is a situation where meaningfulness is no longer relevant and therefore not sought (Clegg, 1994). I would argue that Weber's work can be extended by applying Foucault's conceptualisation of power to organisational theory.

Foucault (1978) is less interested in defining power than in studying *relations of power*:

"[...] what I study are the disciplinary techniques, the modalities of training, the forms of surveillance, [...] what are the practices that one puts in play in order to govern men, that is, to obtain from them a certain way of conducting themselves."

(Foucault, 1978, in Beaulieu, 2012, p105).

Hearn (2012) suggests that Foucault perceives power not as a property of a hierarchical system but as an "uncentred aspect of social relations" (p210).

Foucault's work emphasises *how* power operates through the elements of a system that together make organisations function and adapt (Hardy, 1996). Furthermore, Buchanan and Badham (2008) emphasise that Foucault regards power as a set of techniques whose effects are achieved through mechanisms that regulate people's conduct within social settings (e.g. in schools, factories, hospital). As identified earlier by Weber in relation to bureaucracy, the desired effect of such regulatory practices is compliance (Buchanan and Badham, 2008). Buchanan and Badham (2008) argue that Foucault perceives power as pervasive, productive, and dispersed and its operation can be seen in the influence exerted by organisational members. Nevertheless, relations of power are unstable; they change as an organisation changes.

In analysing organisational settings, Foucault's ideas can reveal the significance for power relations for practices that we often take for granted, such as office layouts, timetables and work allocations. For example, in social work practice, applying Foucault's idea of relations of power would entail a closer look at the seemingly mundane task of filling out referral forms. Gilbert and Powell (2010) says that "documentation fixes the objectification of individuals in writing, codifying, calculating difference and drawing comparison and embedding this in discourse" (p7). This analysis of objectification reminds us of Weber's *rationalisation*. Such objectification through practices can be seen as an example of both Weber's rationalisation and of how Foucault's relations of power can extend Weber's work to consider how power is relationally expressed and practiced (Clegg, 1994; Sadan, 2004).

Dorothy Smith in developing the theory of Institutional Ethnography draws on Foucault's contribution to the analysis of power in two important ways. First, Smith (1990) acknowledges that power is decentred and, second, Smith (2005) uses Foucault's concept of discourse to build her conceptualisation of *ruling relations*. Smith (2005) acknowledges that "an important dimension of the ruling relations is that identified by Michel Foucault in his conception of discourse" (p17). 'Discourse' is a frame that regulates what people say and write: their social interactions. Foucault (1981) says "discourse is not simply that which translates struggles or systems of domination, but it is the thing for which and by which there is struggle, discourse is the power which is to be seized" (p52-53).

Discursive power operates through gaining people's participation. Such participation includes compliance with organisational procedures. Technologies, such as forms, databases, reports, and statistical analyses, are one means by which what can be said and written is regulated and certain discourses reproduced. The pervasiveness of discourse means that although it is regulated, it also incites reactions and so discourse is constantly being reproduced (Smith, 2005).

As noted in Chapter 1, *ruling relations* are "relations that coordinate people's activities across and beyond local sites of everyday experience" (Smith, 2002, p45). These relations are mediated by texts (e.g. print, computer, film) (Smith, 2005) and Smith focusses on the **capacity** of written procedures and regulations to coordinate people's actions as they engage in discursive practice (realisation of discourse through social action) (Hearn, 2012, p88). I discuss the concept of *ruling relations* further in the next section.

The daily and routinised manifestations of these forms of power are evident in inter-agency working. Documentation, and the sharing of such documentation, is subject to procedures involving forms and ICT (Gilbert and Powell, 2010). Here, power can be seen as working through the procedures that include burgeoning technological requirements in report making and information sharing, which are necessary as part of formal working relationships. In the context of children's services, such procedures have been seen as surveillance (e.g. Gilbert and Powell, 2010; Garrett, 2009). Thus, surveillance is an effect of power that operates through the everyday organisational processes of information recording and sharing.

In the inter-agency working literature, power is seen as attached to people in both leadership (e.g. managers) and operational (e.g. support worker) levels (Ahmad et al., 2004), but also to the person's professional status. The latter has been considered as one of the potential barriers to collaborative working (Morrison, 1996; Davis and Smith, 2012). Power is also seen as attached to resources, such as funding (Ahmad et al., 2004), and thus competition for resources can create problems in partnership working (Statham, 2011). As inter-agency working is complex, in that each agency has its own system and procedures and remits, professionals at the front-line of inter-agency working practice constantly confront, negotiate and navigate complex relations of power. In these complex processes, power is not simply hierarchical but contested and negotiated through social relations.

This concept of power has been applied in other fields, to aid understanding power operating in people's everyday activities as enabling. For example, Klein (1998) attempted to understand how people make decisions in the midst of uncertain situations, or what he calls "naturalistic decision making processes" (e.g. a fire

fighter deciding on the best way to save people through the blazing fire). In his study, he was unable to answer clearly how people make decision in such situations. However, he asserts that a combination of experience and expertise are the sources of power that **enable** the decision maker to redefine goals and also to search for ways to achieve goals. In this sense, Klein's study reminds us that professional expertise and experience matter in making decisions. For professionals working in organisations, it can also be said that their experience and expertise are the result of participating in formal, prescribed working relations. Therefore, looking at how professionals' routine work interfaces with systems of procedures and documentation aspects of their work, which the professionals may well see as mundane, can help reveal power relations between professionals and within organisations.

2.3.2. The tenets of Institutional Ethnography

Power relations can be extrapolated to relationships between people, organisations and policy. In Institutional Ethnography (IE), this is referred to as *ruling relations*. *Ruling relations* highlight professionals' relations to policies and structures within their organisation, and to the external policy (e.g. regional or national level regulations), which govern the organisation and thus shape professionals' work practice. Professionals' engagement in these relationships is the object of discovery in Institutional Ethnography. Before exploring further the concept of *ruling relations*, an overview of the other tenets of Institutional Ethnography is warranted.

The feminist standpoint methodology (a tradition in feminism) (Blaikie, 2010) is important for IE. The *feminist standpoint* concentrates on knowledge based on the experiences of the oppressed (in this case, women). While influenced by such feminist methodology, Dorothy Smith's use of *standpoint* was somewhat different

(see Smith, 2005, p10). Rather than using standpoint to identify a certain category (i.e. women) or their position (i.e. oppressed) in society, standpoint is used as a lens to explore the social world.

IE is a methodological approach (Campbell and Gregor, 2002). It is “a method of inquiry that works from the actualities of people’s everyday lives and experience to discover the social as it extends beyond experience” (Smith, 2005, p10).

Furthermore,

Institutional ethnography begins by locating a standpoint in an institutional order that provides the guiding perspective for which the order will be explored. It begins with some issues, concerns, or problems that are real for people and that are situated in their relationships to an institutional order (Smith, 2005, p32).

The *standpoint* is a site from which participants are able to explore their experiences. It is paramount in locating experience from which a direction of inquiry can be established. IE takes the standpoint of institutional participants subject to the institutional order (Campbell, 2010). In taking the ‘standpoint’ position, the researcher is the ‘knower’, as he or she is sharing relevant experiences. This has been criticised in *observations* (research method) because researchers’ analysis and account of what happened is *post hoc* (Mason, 2002, p86). Indeed, IE’s reliance on people’s ability to share their experience as it truly happened is a weakness and has been found challenging in practice (Bisaillon and Rankin, 2012).

While IE has been largely used to research how transformations in public service influence professionals’ everyday practice, literature that has used the standpoint of professionals to understand changes in their roles do not problematise the policy

itself (e.g. Campbell and Rankin, 2017; McKenzie, 2006; Parada et al., 2007). This is because the politics of policy change is not IE's object of interest. Nevertheless, in the context where one's profession would be coupled with another role (such as a head teacher becoming a Named Person professional), based on a policy that is still developing (Named Person legislation), and where its influence on practice is gradually revealed over the course of the research study, applying IE does pose challenges. This will be explained in the methodology chapter (Chapter 3).

An inquiry using IE begins with asking *how* everyday experiences happen (Campbell and Gregor, 2002). This approach shows why IE is considered as having drawn from ethnomethodology⁵ (Wright, 2003). However, Walby (2013) sees IE as deviating from ethnomethodology because people are not used as the objects of analysis. Instead, their experiences are a window into understanding institutional relations. Ethnomethodology is not concerned with institutional relations, whereas IE makes it its object of discovery. By explaining such relations, the researcher is able to make sense of people's experiences (Deveau, 2009).

IE does not focus on the individual, but on what individuals *do*; their actions should be explored in relation to what others are doing. People's activities are coordinated (Smith 1997, 1999); IE requires seeing people in connection with events, and understanding this connection beyond observable activities in which it makes sense of abstract concepts (e.g. power, knowledge, coordination, collaboration).

⁵ Ethnomethodology aims to make explicit what makes up the social order of the actualities of everyday experience (Blaikie, 2010).

In her reviews of the prospects of IE, Wright (2003) notes that “using institutional ethnography can contribute to our understanding of micro and macro social systems and institutional relations that shape individual experience” (p247). This notion assumes that people’s everyday interactions or their direct experiences in the institutional setting where their actions intersect, is coordinated (Smith, 2005). In institutional settings, everyday interactions are organised by policy and managerial procedures, i.e. bureaucracy. IE is interested in explicating how the powers of bureaucracy and policy implicate people’s lives, in other words, how *ruling relations* shape people’s every day experiences.

IE sees bureaucracy as a depersonalised organisation of relations that creates tension for frontline workers (de Montigny, 1995). *Ruling relations* are translocal interactions where the local setting is influenced by an external ruling apparatus and its manifestations (e.g. guidelines, reporting mechanisms, and forms of oral communication between managers and frontline workers). The ‘ruling’ relation in which IE is interested is embedded in social relations. For this reason, IE begins with individuals’ experiences by observing relations and interactions in everyday settings to understand how activities are coordinated. The ruling relations are a conceptualisation of people’s experiences; this is what IE seeks to discover.

Smith (2006) argues that these relations may take place on multiple sites, but they are interrelated. What connects these sites are often documents, such as reports, patient care forms and practice guidance. Since assuming that the use of technology in information processes of public services would help professionals work, is problematic (Munro, 2005), thus IE can be the lens to problematise documentation or records (e.g. computerised health records, referral forms). IE considers these

documents as material forms of texts (Wright, 2003). In the sense, ruling relations are “the textual venues (such as legislation, governing boards, program planners, management, administration) where power is generated and perpetuated in society across multiple sites” (Wright, 2003, p244). It is a power of its own kind, which organises people’s work and takes them away from attending to their clients. Ruling relations point to structure and organisational frameworks. Therefore, *ruling relations* is a useful concept to explore how professionals work together, as it illuminates links between bureaucracy, organisational structure and management, policy and professionals’ everyday work.

In IE, texts (for example, patients’ health record) are often looked at in order to explain how people’s work in one setting (for example, nurses in a hospital ward) are related to people in another setting (directors of the health department) (Campbell and Rankin, 2017). This is the kind of text that is used in observable settings, such as when nurses visit patients. Referral forms are used similarly by frontline professionals in social work contexts (see Prince, 1996; Thompson, 2016).

The power of these kinds of texts, according to IE, is in the way they literally coordinate people’s actions, such as between the one filling out the form and the one who receives it, to the one who inputs the data (Campbell and Gregor, 2002). There is also another kind of text, which is a kind of policy document that regulates how people should interact. These kinds of documents give clues to the way people’s interactions are organised (Campbell and Gregor, 2002).

Institutional relations should be discovered ethnographically and not theoretically (Smith, 2005). Smith argues that one should contrast IE with other sociological

methods of research that are theory-laden. IE's loyalty is to its *discovery*.

"Discovery" is an ongoing process. Walby (2007) questions this process, noting the danger that IE research is potentially never-ending. In awareness, "Institutional ethnography is, in principle, never completed in a single study" (Smith, 2002, p30). There is more than one perspective to discover 'institutional' angles depending on people's position within the institution.

Nevertheless, an IE approach is useful to inquire into formal procedures and strategies (i.e. bureaucracy). IE engages with the social world by problematising the everyday world of people's lives (Smith, 2002). It suggests that the everyday experiences of people engaging with others in particular settings are connected with activities of people in other settings. IE seeks to explicate such relationships so that people are able to understand their position in relation to other people and other settings, and how they contribute to such relations.

2.3.3. Section conclusion

This section has located power in the discussion about people and organisations: between people within organisations, and between people and organisations. It reiterates the need to investigate power relations by taking into account structures and procedures in organisations and in multi-agency work settings. Institutional relations where the structures and procedures intersect, provide a context for exploring inter-agency working processes. Therefore a key question for my research is what inter-agency working, which takes into account the institutional relations, looks like.

This section has reviewed Institutional Ethnography's relevance to researching power relations by mapping relationships between people and organisational procedures. Due to a discovery (instead of theory-laden) approach, and interest in the relationship between people's actions and ruling practices, the section has argued why Institutional Ethnography is a useful approach to inquire into the complex inter-agency work processes in which professionals engage. As such, power relations are covered by discussions on *ruling relations*.

2.4. *Getting it right for every child* policy

Elements of inter-agency working that were discussed in Section 2.2, such as working together for a shared goal and single assessment, are evident in Scotland's major policies for children, including GIRFEC (see Grek, Ozga, and Lawn, 2009; Ballian Council, 2010; Scottish Executive, 2006).

GIRFEC, the national approach to achieving better outcomes for children and young people through seamless integrated support, emphasises the need for all services and agencies working with children and families to work together. It tasks practitioners with *adopting* a new perspective on children's lives, and *adapting* to new ways of working in order to provide better support for children and their families. This section introduces GIRFEC as the focus of contemporary public service reform and considers the implications of such reform at the frontline. This is followed by a critical review of the Named Person policy as part of GIRFEC.

2.4.1. *What is GIRFEC?*

Getting it right for every child, or GIRFEC, is a national approach to "improve outcomes for children and young people by changing the way adults think and act to

help all children and young people grow, develop and reach their full potential” (Scottish Government, 2008, p6). GIRFEC came out at the height of scrutiny surrounding the Children’s Hearings System⁶ (see Scottish Executive, 2005), and during the improvement in data sharing across public agencies (Grek et al., 2009). Changes in children’s services were due and it was essential “to find new ways of working together” (Scottish Executive, 2005, p11). Improvement in children’s services was aimed to effectively meet the needs of children, and integrated services was again emphasised in this new Scottish Government initiative. The underlying principle is that practitioners should adopt an ecological point of view, where services are built around children’s needs. This means moving from service-led to needs-led assessment, planning and intervention through a reduction of duplication of the services comprised in the National Practice Model.

GIRFEC brings together different policies and is the central approach of the Scottish Government to help children and young people (Scottish Government, 2008, 2010a). Moreover, it is said to be in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), recognising children’s rights (Aldgate, 2013; Scottish Government, 2008; Ballian Council, 2010). GIRFEC is welcomed as an approach that enables children to have their voices heard and wellbeing supported (Together, 2010, 2011). However, some of GIRFEC’s statements are quite generalised, creating a dependency on practice to realise children’s rights (Cleland and Sutherland, 2009). Meanwhile, continuous reform in public services changes the way in which public

⁶ The Children’s Hearings System in Scotland is defined as the care and justice system for Scotland’s children and young people. A fundamental principle is that children who commit offences, and children who need care and protection, are dealt with in the same system, as these are often the same

services are delivered. This is also true with GIRFEC. It requires a “‘let go’ of old ways of working and embrace not only new methods but also the different assumptions and expectations that underpin the Getting it Right approach and similar policy assumptions elsewhere in the United Kingdom” (Stradling and Alexander, 2012, p73).

Discussing problems with GIRFEC cannot be separated from the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. The Act was meant as a catalyst to progress the implementation of GIRFEC (Scottish Parliament, 2013). Before the 2014 Act was passed, there were debates surrounding the role of the Named Person. The consultation reports concerns, for example, that teachers feared that the role implied more work for them. Another example, children’s right to confidentiality and privacy has been overruled by the information sharing provision of the 2014 Act, because the Act provides too low a threshold for professionals to share information without consent (Davis et al., 2014). More recently, it has been considered as interfering with parents’ rights (Christian Institute, 2014).

As an approach to improve the delivery of services and outcomes for children, GIRFEC applies a set of indicators to measure wellbeing that are in line with Scotland’s vision for children (see for example *For Scotland Children, Children’s Charter*). The indicators are used by practitioners to identify concerns and expected outcomes. Meanwhile, GIRFEC has received criticism for its wellbeing indicators (Coles et al., 2016). Stoddart (2015) notes that SHANARRI (*Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included*) indicators are

children (from “The Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration” webpage, accessed on 8 September

lacking constitution in the way the Scottish Government uses and discusses it.

Additionally, Tisdall and Davis (2015) question the Scottish Government's (e.g. Aldgate, 2013) effort to link SHANARRI and articles in the UNCRC, arguing that wellbeing and rights are two different concepts and efforts to merge them untenable.

Some education authorities perceive that their practices are in line with the GIRFEC approach (Education Scotland, 2012), however some local authorities⁷ still see GIRFEC as social work agenda (p2). Yet, in an article by Vincent and colleagues (2010) which draws on process reviews of the Child Protection Reform Programme in 2007, it is noted that teachers can relate to their work beyond teaching; they "incorporated aspects of broader welfare within their descriptions of what they did" (p447) when they engage in an inter-agency working setting. Although the article does not elaborate this finding, it attributes the ability to relate welfare issues to teachers' involvement in the previous inter-agency working mechanism, as established prior to the reform programme. This finding indicates that working with other professionals in an inter-agency setting allows teachers to perceive their own practice in a wider welfare context, a quality that fits GIRFEC's objective of identifying wellbeing concerns in universal service.

The GIRFEC intervention strategy starts at universal services, and moves up as concerns become greater. This ascension of concern is decided by the Named Person. He or she has the responsibility of making judgements as to when a child or young person is in need of help or services. Because identification of needs takes place in

2014).

universal services, the Named Person is usually a Health Visitor (for toddlers), a Head Teacher (for primary school children) or a Guidance Teacher (for secondary school children). If more than one agency needs to respond to the needs of children, a Lead Professional will take the responsibility of the Named Person. The Lead Professional will then work with children and families to ensure care is provided timely and appropriately. Appendix 3 maps the roles of the Named Person and the Lead Professional in detail. Thus far, the practice model of the Named Person and Lead Professional is the representation of GIRFEC's integrated children's services at the frontline. It suggests the transformation of the way practitioners work.

Early intervention is one of GIRFEC's ways to improve children's wellbeing (Coles et al., 2016). Davis and Smith (2012) perceive local multi-agency forums as part of early intervention measures. Early intervention points to universal service. The literature reviewed here suggests links between the early intervention agenda of GIRFEC and universal service's role. The link becomes clear in the multi-agency setting that was initiated by the Councils (see Davis and Smith, 2012; Stradling et al., 2009) and was put in place in the context of GIRFEC implementation.

Munro (2010) notes two kinds of early intervention. The first is intervention "to counter the adverse effects of socioeconomic disadvantage by providing a rich and stimulating environment to children and easy access for parents to advice and support" (p25). This echoes the idea behind promoting early years in Scotland, as it aims support to families in an effort to reduce inequality (see Scottish Government

⁷ Local government in Scotland is consisted of 32 Local Authorities. Local authority areas reflect the geographical diversity within Scotland with wide variations in size and population. Source: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Government/local-government> (Accessed on 22 August 2017).

and Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, 2008). The second iteration includes a prevention strategy, as it necessitates increasing the involvement of universal service's workforce in assessing and responding to low level difficulties (Munro, 2010, p26). The latter kind refers to the *Every Child Matters* policy in England. There are similarities with GIRFEC's idea of early intervention, as stated in its 8th Core Component: "Maximising the skilled workforce within universal services to address needs and risks as early as possible" (Scottish Government, 2012a, p7).

Munro's (2011) review on child protection acknowledges the significant role that universal services need to play in assessing early signs of difficulties in families. She notes that the services should be able to offer help as required. This does not replace the role of social workers; what Munro (2011) promotes is a universal services core and early intervention agenda in which the professionals understand the complex lives of the people who access their services. Through multi-agency partnerships, these professionals are becoming accustomed to connecting their work with broader welfare issues, as Vincent and colleagues (2010), Davis and Smith (2012) and Stradling and colleagues (2009) have noted.

Although I found no mention about "stages of intervention" in GIRFEC guidance published by the Scottish Government, Local Authorities' guidance provide the practicalities of implementing GIRFEC, which include intervention stages that require a referral process through the use of referral or wellbeing concern forms (e.g. Highland Children's Services, 2016; Inverclyde Council, 2016). Highland Pathfinder successes highlight the benefit of change in practice. The use of Child Concerns

Forms⁸ seems to have shifted police officers' perspective on what information is relevant in incidents that involve children (Stradling et al., 2009).

The Pathfinder Project highlighted the urgency of reducing the number of meetings that children and families have to go to. This issue was raised by families of children who had been working with multi-agency support. In other words, children who would need Child's Plan⁹ or Lead Professionals to coordinate support. The project reduced the number of meetings for the children and families to one multi-agency meeting for discussing the Child's Plan (Stradling et al., 2009). Note, though, that does not mean only one meeting happens for each referred child. Depending on the recommendation of the Child's Plan, the Named Person might want to discuss the case with professionals from other agencies through meetings or telephone calls and emails. This situation provides a different perspective to minimising bureaucracy than GIRFEC had originally envisioned (see Scottish Government, 2005). More often than not, difficulties that children and families are experiencing are identified at the crossroads of single or multi-agency support: the object of family support work and local forums (Davis and Smith, 2012). The number of children and young people at such crossroads are more than those who 'clearly' needs Child's Plan. This situation puts pressure on the role of Named Person.

⁸ Child Concerns Form is a name of an assessment form for children's wellbeing that should be filled out by professionals who have concerns about a particular child or young person under his/her care. The form should then be sent to the child's identified Named Person or Lead Professional (Highland Children's Services, 2016).

The following table presents a summary of what has been discussed in this section. It is an overview of the changes that GIRFEC proposes. The overview is presented based on GIRFEC's 10 key components (Scottish Government, 2012a), wherein GIRFEC's aim to change *culture*, *practice* and *system*, components 1 to 3, can be grouped into 'culture', while components 4 to 7 cover the 'practice' and components 8 to 10 represent 'change of system' (Education Scotland, 2012). Overall, the table outlines examples of GIRFEC's successes and its challenges.

⁹ A Child's Plan will be available for children who require extra support that is not generally available to address a child or young person's needs and improve their wellbeing. Every plan, should include and record: information about the child's wellbeing needs including the views of the child and their parent(s); details of the action to be taken; the service(s) that will provide the support; the way in which the support is to be provided; the outcome that the plan aims to achieve; and when the plan should be reviewed. A Child's Plan will also record who will coordinate the support. This person is known as the Lead Professional for the plan who will work with the child and their parent(s) to keep them informed. Source: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright/childs-plan> (accessed on 8 August 2017).

Table 2. GIRFEC 10 core components

GIRFEC's core components:	Changes in:	Examples and challenges of each change:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A focus on improving outcomes for children, young people and their families based on a shared understanding of wellbeing 2. A common approach to gaining consent and to sharing information where appropriate 3. An integral role for children, young people and families in assessment, planning and intervention 	<p><i>Culture</i></p>	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Multi-agency working is widely adopted by Education Authorities (Education Scotland, 2012). - Teachers have engaged in inter-agency working prior to GIRFEC and therefore can relate their work to welfare work (Vincent et al., 2010). <p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - GIRFEC is seen as a 'social work' agenda (Education Scotland, 2012). - Different agencies have different technology systems for information sharing (Education Scotland, 2012; Stradling et al., 2009).
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. A co-ordinated and unified approach to identifying concerns, assessing needs and agreeing on actions and outcomes, based on the Wellbeing Indicators 5. Streamlined planning, assessment and decision-making processes that lead to the right help at the right time 6. Consistent high standards of co-operation, joint working and communication where more than one agency needs to be involved, locally and across Scotland 	<p><i>Practice</i></p>	<p>Examples:</p> <p>In the Highlands, using the Child Concerns Forms allows police officers to include wellbeing related comments (e.g. home environment and presence of non-family members at home) (Stradling et al., 2009).</p> <p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wellbeing indicators are too broad (Coles et al., 2016). - GIRFEC's legal statutes (the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, along with the Revised Draft Statutory Guidance) set too low a threshold for professionals to share information (The Christian Institute and others v The Lord Advocate [2016] UKSC 51).

GIRFEC's core components:	Changes in:	Examples and challenges of each change:
7. A Named Person for every child and young person, and a Lead Professional (where necessary) to co-ordinate and monitor multi-agency activity	<i>Practice</i>	<p>Challenges (continued):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fewer meetings for service users does not necessarily mean fewer meetings for professionals working on the case (see Stradling et al., 2009). - Frontline workers are constantly negotiating between 'needs', 'risk' and 'wellbeing' concepts (Coles et al., 2016).
<p>8. Maximising the skilled workforce within universal services to address needs and risks as early as possible</p> <p>9. A confident and competent workforce across all services for children, young people and their families</p> <p>10. The capacity to share demographic, assessment, and planning information – including electronically – within and across agency boundaries</p>	<i>System</i>	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training of schools' staff is key to successful implementation of GIRFEC (Education Scotland, 2012). - Evidence from practice: engagement in multi-agency working is fruitful and promotes an understanding of different professionals' work (Education Scotland, 2012; Vincent et al., 2010). <p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On becoming the Lead Professionals: health visitors were not confident in chairing the multi-agency meetings (Stradling et al., 2009) - A combination of lack of training, the use of different 'languages' and different IT systems has hindered capacity to implement GIRFEC consistently (Education Scotland, 2012).

2.4.2. Tensions in implementing GIRFEC for frontline service and partnership working

GIRFEC is adopting a multi-agency approach to improve services for better outcomes. Davis and Smith (2012) consider GIRFEC as aimed at addressing problems in children's services that often use deficit approach¹⁰ to assess children and families' concerns. For example, labelling families who have substance misuse problems as problematic and thus provide addiction-treatment service that does not focus on empowering the families. The GIRFEC approach is acknowledging children and families' asset-based resilience and promoting partnerships between service users and service providers (see also Coles et al., 2016). However, GIRFEC tenets have not escaped criticism.

Davis and colleagues (2014) write, "...GIRFEC does not require a fundamental shift in thinking in local authorities that will change the power relationships in children's services" (p14). However, changes in *practice* that GIRFEC promotes require the workforce to be reflexive about their competence, skills and confidence (Scottish Government, 2010b). Between people in an organisational setting, a reflexive approach to practice can change power relationships between them (Lawler and Bilson, 2010).

Apart from the challenges brought by the the role of the Named Person, these people (as well as the Lead Professional) are also workers within an organisational context, in which the changes that GIRFEC requires (i.e. in practice, system and culture) lead to what happens, or should happen, on the frontline. Improvement can mean a

¹⁰ Deficit approach is adopted in traditional practices, focussing on problems or what is wrong with children or families, resulting in labelling and stigmatised intervention (Davis, 2011).

number of things including less-bureaucratic service, fewer meetings for children and their parents, shared information among practitioners, and a single plan for every child. The success of such improvements depend in so far as how the Named Person and the Lead Professional deliver the services. As a central policy framework (with indicators and an outcomes-based agenda), GIRFEC requires standardised paperwork, joint assessment, training and more. In the bureaucratic domain, standardisation is always challenging (Davis and Smith, 2012). It only works for the ones who *can* employ it, and in joined-up working there may be many bureaucratic challenges, as have been discussed earlier in this chapter.

Davis and Smith (2012) call for creativity of leaders and innovation of systems in such organised situations. Multi-agency initiatives, such as multi-agency local forums at a local authority in Scotland – they gave the pseudonym Pentesk, were found to be constructive in that professionals were enabled to build good relations and reduce their boundaries of communication. Such success, they argue, was caused by practice (streamlined and complex assessments), culture (shared vision established by training) and systems change (devolved management and dialogue) (p110). In the context of sense-making in organisations, this finding supports the importance of shared experience to achieve joint meaning (Weick, 1995). However, Weick (1995) also notes that uncertainty can be an opportunity for professionals to make sense of a complex situation, wanting to reduce the confusion. Uncertainty allows people “to negotiate some understanding of what they face and what a solution would look like” (p186). This is something to be explored in a multi-agency work setting.

Education Scotland (2012) has found that in authorities with clear strategies on the way they implement GIRFEC, they use “multi-agency locality groups as a vehicle for delivering improved services and support to children and families” (p5). As such, the forums are a formalised mechanism for professionals to work together. Multi-professional teams and forums are examples of formal ways of working together that enable the coordination of support for children and families (see Davis and Smith, 2012).

One of the mechanisms of working together that GIRFEC promotes is the multi-agency forum. Research on multi-agency forums in the context of women and children affected by domestic abuse has found negative impact for women’s participation (Humphreys and Houghton, 2008, p80); one research found that the forums absorbed resources and used as ‘talking shop’, while another found that having the multi-agency forums reduced the involvement of women survivors to direct services according to their needs.

Meanwhile, Davis and Smith (2012) have found that multi-agency forums enable engagement of different actors, including children and families, and have led to supportive action points for children, not leaving a single agency to make decisions in complex cases; this echoes the GIRFEC policy intention. While pointing out the challenges of the top-down nature in children’s services, Davis and Smith (2012) propose that professionals adopt a reflexive approach to their practice in multi-professional contexts. It is worth looking at such forums’ meaning for head teachers/guidance teachers’ work, because the development of the Named Person entails changes in these professionals’ role in the inter-agency working setting, as well as relationships with other professionals.

Robinson and colleagues (2005) found that being part of a multi-agency team has the potential to improve teachers' professional identity. However, they argue, to achieve this potential the team must become a supportive space for teachers where they can learn from differences – in values, skills and practice – between themselves. In addition, personal identity was examined in the context where teachers' knowledge and expertise was scrutinised by other professionals or service users (Robinson et al., 2005). A reflexive approach that allows professionals to take time in dealing with emotions and uncertainties may also facilitate the development of their judgement (Taylor and White, 2006).

2.4.3. The Named Person: the what, the who and the problems

Nearly, all children in Scotland, from birth to 18 years of age or beyond if still in school, will have a Named Person¹¹. The Named Person is a single point of contact for children, parents and other professionals who can help access services and identify where there may be concern about a child's wellbeing. For most children, these professionals are health visitors for pre-school children, and head teachers or guidance teachers for school-aged children (Scottish Government, 2016).

The duty to implement the Named Person falls on Health Boards (for health visitors) or Local Authorities (for head/guidance teachers). The Scottish Government (2014a) elaborates the definition as follows:

The Named Person service includes the communication infrastructure, professional support, governance framework and the maintenance of local policies, protocols, procedures, guidance and training; plus communication

¹¹ Young people who are serving in the reserve or regular armed forces are excluded (Part 4 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014; Sutherland, 2016).

about the role of the Named Person, how the role will be delivered locally, and how to contact a child's Named Person (p1).

Also, the Named Person has been considered as part of the early intervention agenda. The Scottish Government is confident that early intervention would save money, and they found support in the Christie Commission¹² report that highlighted the importance of early intervention (Scottish Parliament, 2013).

At the time of writing, the implementation of the Named Person provision is not legally binding, as the Scottish Government is required by the UK Supreme Court to amend Part 4 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, that acts as a legal foundation for the service (see Kidner, 2016). Despite this setback, the Scottish Government is still committed to implementing the service¹³, providing they make changes to accommodate the UK Supreme Court judgment that overruled the information sharing provisions, as stated in the Part 4 of the Act and its subsequent Revised Draft Statutory Guidance (see *The Christian Institute and others v The Lord Advocate* [2016] UKSC 51). Paragraph 19 of Part 4 of the 2014 Act, which regulates the functions of Named Person, can be found in Appendix 4.

The UK Supreme Court decision has addressed a number of issues that had been raised during the consultation period of the then Children and Young People Bill.

One of them was GIRFEC's conceptualisation of wellbeing. In relation to the Named

¹² Report on the Future Delivery of Public Services by the Commission on the Future Delivery of Public Services, chaired by Dr Campbell Christie. Published on 29 June 2011.

¹³ Scottish Government (2017) news page on the 7th of March 2017 about Deputy First Minister, John Swinney, statement at the Scottish Parliament writes, "Mr Swinney said: 'As I made clear in my statement to Parliament in September, the Scottish Government remains absolutely committed to the Named Person service as a way to support children and their families....However, their judgment required us to change the provisions relating to information sharing. This has presented us with the opportunity to improve the service and reassure parents and practitioners and the wider public that it will work with and for families...'"

Person's role to offer advice, information and support, the wide scope of wellbeing and SHANARRI factors created difficulties in ensuring the professionals were able to take up the role effectively (see *The Christian Institute and others v The Lord Advocate* [2016] UKSC 51, par95).

The UK Supreme Court decided against the Named Person's information sharing provisions for the reason that the threshold for professionals to share information regarding children and young people was too low (*The Christian Institute and others v The Lord Advocate* [2016] UKSC 51). Concern around this provision is not new. For example, during the consultation period for the Bill in 2012-13, CLAN Childlaw (Scottish Parliament, 2013) noted their concern regarding the Named Person's responsibility for sharing information without clear ways to protect young people's right to confidentiality. Since then, another concern has been raised by Davis and colleagues (2014) who, from the rights perspective, have warned that the requirements of information sharing in the current state of Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 is insufficient. This concern should not be taken lightly since the school culture of confidentiality and information sharing often depends more on professional judgement than children and young people's rights to confidentiality (see Jenkins and Palmer, 2012).

During the consultation for Children and Young People (Scotland) Act, other concerns regarding the Named Person had been raised: the role of parents (e.g. fear of interference with family lives) and the specific duties of the Named Person (i.e. organisations perceived different expectations about the role). Regarding the latter specifically, it is noted that "many bodies highlighted practical and resource issues that needed to be resolved for the role to work effectively" (Scottish Parliament,

2013, p15). An example is provided by the Royal College of Nursing, which raised the workforce problem of under-staffed and overworked. A proposed solution was included in the consultation document, involving delegating some administrative tasks of the role to other staff, as stated by NHS Lothian. This proposal foresaw the administrative task that the role would require.

Concerns regarding the Named Person's role also emerged during the Pathfinder Project in the Highlands (see Stradling et al., 2009). Reports on the project noted that the role is crucial in the processes that lead to ensuring children and young people are getting the support they need both timely and appropriately, even if the Named Persons are not the ones providing the service. The report also observed that the complexity of the role is due to its interface with the Lead Professionals' role, and concerned with the 'what if' should the Named Person become a Lead Professional. However, there was no discussion about the Named Persons' role interface with their own professional remit. Relevant to this concern, Education Scotland (2012) found that "most staff in establishments do not have a sound understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the Named Person or Lead Professional. Correspondingly, these roles are not being used consistently, either within or across education authorities" (p6), this poses challenges for change in GIRFEC *practice*, as mentioned in Table 2 (on page 63).

While GIRFEC has been welcomed for its promise to improve partnership between service users (i.e. children and families) and service providers (e.g. Stradling et al., 2009; Vincent et al., 2010), the Named Person provision, as it was represented in the 2014 Act and subsequent guidelines, has had an adverse effect. It is unpopular among many groups (e.g. NO2NP, Scottish Parent Teacher Council, Schoolhouse

Home Education Association, The Law Society of Scotland) because the scheme is seen as state interference into family lives.

The Named Person introduction has been considered to be ‘net widening’ (Mellon, 2015), state guardianship (Jackson, 2016) and the state’s surveillance on families (Waiton, 2016). Stoddart (2015) writes, “The sophistication of the assessment, in order to ascertain whether the involvement of other agencies might be required, is arguably beyond the competence of even an experienced guidance or pastoral care teacher” (p108). This undermines teachers’ professional judgement, assuming teachers are unaccustomed to working together mechanisms. These two issues are contrary to discussions that have been presented earlier in this chapter.

Stoddart (2015) examines the surveillance nature of the Named Person role. The tendency of the Named Person in creating a surveillance culture is due to a lack of understanding of how far reaching surveillance *is* in public life, and also due to the Scottish Government seemingly mixed messages regarding the role of Named Person. The latter is particularly important as Stoddart notes the messages are convoluted between suggesting parenting is subject to GIRFEC and the Named Person has the assisting role for parents. In addition, professionals who are going to be Named Persons are seen as harnessing the power of sharing information but lack the capacity to do so. He discusses it by stating that “the Named Person is responsible for making initial assessment, entitled to receive and required to be given appropriate information about a child and her family” (p102). Although the statement reads well with the existing Named Person policy documents, Stoddart’s statement lacks connection to the current practice context. The role needs to connect to how much of those actions have been done by teachers at promoted posts or health

visitors or those who are going to become Named Persons, as part of their day-to-day job.

Meanwhile, Garrett (2009) takes on a narrower understanding of surveillance. He argues that the ‘surveillance state’ is not only relevant to children’s services because surveillance is ‘everywhere’. He argues that surveillance efforts and tools are predominantly generated by the state and not bottom-up. He writes,

Indeed, promoting ‘security’ and averting or managing ‘risk’, albeit in a somewhat different sense, can be interpreted as indirectly influencing and steering policy in relation to interventions with children and their families and in the shaping of ideas fixated with ‘tracking’ socially wayward young people. Moreover, the ‘focus of the risk gaze’, as Rose (2000: 332) argues, is increasingly organised and ‘packaged by structured risk assessments, risk schedules, forms and proformas [and] database fields’ (p69, see also Webb 2006).

Considering that most professionals who would be the Named Persons are either promoted teachers or health visitors, their professional remit already includes processes of assessing and receiving information, either by the child and family or by other professionals. And yet Stoddart (2015) perceives that the Named Person role is potentially mimicking social worker, and by doing so he undermines the complexity of those professionals’ remit.

Waiton (2016) tries to explain that the Named Person is assumed to be a ‘state guardian’. As such he uses a particular angle, which he claims is “the changing nature of the relationship between the state and the family” (p2). Using a considerable amount of work from other scholars in the area of social work and safeguarding children, he argues that the Named Person exemplifies the public

service shift towards measured outcomes for children and organised risk management by professionals. Together, this has implications for family lives in a way that gives the government scope to interfere.

Despite mentioning that the Named Person is embedded in the GIRFEC approach, Waiton (2016) did not put the Named Person discussion within the context of streamlining services and inter-agency working, merely focussing on the contested role of the Named Person “to oversee the child’s wellbeing” (p4). While basing his argument on the growing concern in the area of child protection, like Stoddart (2015), Waiton forgets the context in which a Named Person is different from a social worker. It would have been useful to look at why the Named Person service has the potential to resemble problems emerging in social work, but in its own, differing context.

Stoddart (2015) warns that the Named Person is potentially repeating problems in previous social work practice. He points out that the social work turn to administrative reporting, including ICT, has taken away social workers’ time and resources from actually meeting children and families’ needs; this is in keeping with Munro’s (2011) and White’s (2010) studies. Stoddart uses them to support the idea that public service development towards more reliance on IT systems signals, along with the standardisation of parenting and childhood, a move to the surveillance culture.

There are two problems with Stoddart’s (2015) argument. First, although contested, the reason behind the growing reliance on ICT for social work is to prevent child abuse case increases – it is aimed at improving professionals’ accountability (Prince,

1996). With the breadth of literature in this area from a social work focus, it is equally important to remember that teachers (and health visitors) are not social workers.

Second, standardising parenting and childhood is not the aim of the Named Person. Although this is, again, undermining the Named Person professionals' judgement, Stoddart's critique is somewhat shared by other scholars (e.g. Mellon, 2015; Waiton, 2016). The use of wellbeing concepts and subsequently its SHANARRI indicators (Coles et al., 2016), which has always been an underlying problem and concern with GIRFEC, is now a problem of the Named Person (see Stoddart, 2015).

Mellon (2015) argues that the Named Person legislation proposes putting invasive power in the hands of professionals who will undertake the role. Her examination, on the part of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, about the Named Person role, suggests an imbalance of power in partnership working where the Act does not require the Named Person professional to take parents' or families' views into account and respect confidentiality in safeguarding wellbeing (p71). This is contrary to GIRFEC's values and principles to "work in partnership with families" and "respect confidentiality and sharing information" (Scottish Government, 2012a). Instead, the Act puts more reliance on the professionals' judgement.

Stoddart's (2015), Waiton's (2016) and Mellon's (2015) critiques provide an opportunity to look closer at the professionals who are going to embody the Named Person's role and responsibilities. The Named Persons are expected to work across boundaries of organisational framework and structure. There is a term for the professionals who embody these traits: 'Boundroids'. It was applied to family

support workers (Smith, 2008) in one case study where these workers were not only undertaking the prescribed family support worker role, but were expected to have the confidence and skills to work with professionals from other agencies (p139).

However, there have been issues on the frontline practice regarding changes of role. For example, health visitors are reticent when their work is focussed more on needs-based approaches and not family visiting (Davis, 2011). This adds to the concern raised in the evaluation report on the Highland Pathfinder project that found health visitors are not confident in chairing the multi-agency meetings (Stradling et al., 2009), though they are anticipated to become Lead Professionals.

One idea that was not scrutinised in recent public debate on the Named Person or in the UK Supreme Court decision is whether the Named Person should encourage inter-agency working among service providers (Scottish Parliament, 2013). As Paragraph 82 of the consultation document of the then 2014 Bill suggests, the Scottish Government even considers the Named Person part of a wider support network, and should be available when children and families need it.

82. In response, the Minister acknowledged that —the parent is the most important person, and the most important educator, in a child’s life, and said that the named person provisions were —about providing a support network and framework for families, **if they need it** [emphasis added] (Scottish Parliament, 2013).

Unfortunately, the phrase “if they need it” cannot be easily discerned from the 2014 Bill (nor the Act); this has been the topic of media furore, and Mellon (2015) argues that the wording of the Act differs from the claims of its proponents. What Mellon and other opponents of the Named Person have opposed is the voluntary versus

statutory role of the Named Person. However important, this is not a challenge to how practical it would be for the Named Person to work with other professionals.

The Bill consultation document recognises the need for “robust guidance” (Scottish Parliament, 2013) to ensure the role can be undertaken in practice, an idea that has not been realised. On July 28th, 2016, the UK Supreme Court decision effectively postponed the implementation of the Named Person and dismissed the Revised Draft Statutory Guidance for being not vigorous enough.

Therefore, caution needs to be taken when changes need to be made to the existing practice of the Named Person’s role. Building upon what has been done is unavoidable, especially because the Named Person is part of GIRFEC implementation, and all local authorities have implemented GIRFEC, though to varying degrees (see Education Scotland, 2012).

Since “safeguarding the wellbeing of the child or young person” (par19 of Part 4 of the 2014 Act) is one of the functions of the Named Person, it is useful to look at what ‘safeguarding’ involves. In explaining what ‘safeguarding’ would entail, Walker (2008) remarks,

Clearly, experienced professionals generally make judgements based on sound evidence and processing of that evidence; however, if there is a further layer of processing involved, and an expectation to approach families in a broad preventative manner, this could blur the judgements regarding ‘significant’ harm, particularly where any harm is unsupported by dramatic physical evidence such as a serious injury (p69).

His remarks relate to the difficulty of early intervention as the role of universal service professionals, but also signals that local forums that provide support for the

professionals (see also Davis and Smith, 2012) might be a good mechanism to safeguard children and young people.

If the Named Person is ‘available if required’ (Scottish Government, 2014a), what *is* available is a person working on delivering universal services to more than one child, trained for their profession but as the Named Person also expected to communicate, deliberate, and may or may not be the one to take action in addressing a child’s specific needs or concerns. Equally, this might encourage frontline workers in universal services to be more proactive in assessing difficulties and providing support early. This aligns with the ideals of early intervention discussed earlier.

Thus far, the section has suggested that the Named Persons in GIRFEC are key players, not only in ensuring children and families get the appropriate support timeously and effectively, but because in relation to such responsibility they need to work with practitioners within and across agencies (see for example Ballian Council, 2010; Scottish Government, 2010b). Therefore, my research seeks to explore what the Named Persons do when they work together with other professionals in implementing GIRFEC.

2.4.4. Section conclusion

This section has critically reviewed GIRFEC and the Named Person. The first part of the section provided an overview of GIRFEC before discussing the tensions around its implementation and its wellbeing concept. Earlier proposals for GIRFEC (Scottish Government, 2005) envisioned that “children’s services should minimise the burden of meetings, referrals, processes, report writing, assessments and plans on children, young people and their families” (p20) by working together. As such, the section has

provided a rationale for researching inter-agency working processes of GIRFEC implementation. While GIRFEC may be an opportunity for professionals to reflect on their own practice, its wide-ranging wellbeing indicators and different professionals' practice background may pose challenges in its implementation. It is then necessary to look deeper into mechanisms of GIRFEC implementation (such as local multi-agency forum), where the professionals work together.

The last part of this section has introduced the Named Person and discussed criticisms of it as a sign of a 'surveillance state', as establishing 'state guardianship', and as potentially creating additional work for the professionals who are going to become the Named Person. In so doing, the section has highlighted issues of information sharing, professional judgement and the complexities of inter-agency working with surveillance and children and family rights. The section has looked favourably upon the UK Supreme Court decision in regard to the Named Person's information sharing provision (as it was introduced). However, the section has pointed out the gap in the debate and in the Supreme Court's decision: whether the Named Person would encourage inter-agency working. My research will address this gap.

The Named Person scheme will be built upon existing GIRFEC partnership working mechanisms and, therefore, tensions within the working mechanisms (such as coping with developments of information technology, professionals' confidence and ability to coordinate) are likely to emerge. Meanwhile, some of the benefits of working together, such as shared experience and negotiating different concepts, are also likely to appear.

2.5. Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed inter-agency working in the literature. While pointing out the problems surrounding different terminological usage, the chapter has not proposed a new definition. Instead, it has shown how the overlaps and different uses of the same terms make such efforts benign in researching how professionals work together. This chapter has also identified a gap in the literature, which this thesis contributes to: looking at the complexities within and learning processes of inter-agency working.

Information sharing, as one of the main traits of inter-agency working, is problematised in this chapter. Some of the problems that were identified, such as the burgeoning use of technology to record information, came from social work discourse. In particular, the chapter highlighted how the growing dependence on computer technology has reduced reliance on professionals' judgements. And yet most children that have difficulties at home or in school are often identified early, within universal services such as school and health services. It is then necessary to assess how information sharing practices within and across these services make use of the technology.

This chapter has welcomed the need to investigate power relations by taking into account structures and procedures in organisations and in multi-agency work. Thus, this chapter has provided a quick review on the different uses of *power*. It paid particular attention to the concept of *ruling relations*. This is used in Institutional Ethnography to suggest that investigating ruling practices (e.g. bureaucracy, management, administration), starts with professionals' mundane work, such as

filling out forms or attending meetings. These insights are highly applicable when looking at GIRFEC implementation, because it brings together different professionals from different agencies, each with their own system of working. Furthermore, GIRFEC's Named Person policy puts a duty to implement upon Local Authorities, and is thus likely to change the way professionals work together. Ruling relations are useful here to look at the change in order to reveal the power dynamics between professionals across agencies.

Lastly, this chapter has contextualised GIRFEC within the problems of inter-agency working and power relations (discussed in the first two sections). Literature on early intervention was used to connect GIRFEC agenda of early identification of timely provision of support within the social work literature. GIRFEC agenda of 'minimising bureaucracy' was given a cautionary analysis by providing a case example that questioned the effectiveness of inter-professional communication with regards to a Child's Plan. Furthermore, the chapter has shown a contrasting view on the effectiveness of multi-agency forum. The chapter has also established the importance of understanding the Named Person in relation to GIRFEC implementation.

It has also highlighted many of the criticisms toward the scheme, ever since the consultation period of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. It concludes with the opportunity to explore what has been overlooked in public debate and in the UK Supreme Court decision surrounding the Named Person policy. As the Named Person scheme will be built upon existing GIRFEC partnership working mechanisms, looking at how the scheme is implemented in practice (as part of

GIRFEC), would lead to an exploration of the changing processes in inter-agency working.

Following the review of the literature and identification of gaps and tensions, the questions that guided my research project were:

1. What does inter-agency working look like within the institutional relations of GIRFEC's implementation?
2. What do Named Persons do when they work together with other practitioners in implementing GIRFEC?

My research began by looking at the day-to-day practice of working together between professionals who are going to be Named Persons and other professionals, in order to reveal the organised working arrangements within the professionals' organisations, and how these arrangements influenced their working together activities. The following chapter discusses how I went about to do this exploration.

Chapter 3 – Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This chapter explains how the research was conducted and the choices I made in undertaking this research project. The chapter starts with a restatement of the research aim and questions and then, following the ideas of Institutional Ethnography (IE), discusses how observations, interviews and document analysis work together in discovering the problematic in the inter-agency working of children's services. This will be followed with how I actually generated data from the field and end with how I analysed it.

3.2. Research aim and questions

In my research I sought to understand inter-agency working within a real-life context. As stated at the end of Chapter 2, the aim of the research was to explore how professionals work together to implement GIRFEC, and so shed light on the processes of inter-agency working in Scotland's children's services.

When designing my research I initially aimed to look at the roles of both the Named Person and the Lead Professional in order to understand inter-agency working in the implementation of GIRFEC. The Named Person and the Lead Professional in GIRFEC are key people, not only in ensuring children and families get the appropriate support timeously and effectively, but also because in relation to such a responsibility they themselves need to work effectively with other practitioners within or across agencies (see for example Ballian Council, 2010; Scottish Government, 2010b).

However, during my preliminary fieldwork I decided that I would only focus on the Named Person because this role caused the most discussion amongst my research participants – about how it would work in practice. In addition, focussing on the Named Person would be more manageable for me. More specifically I focussed on the Named Person's role within the context of Primary and Secondary Schools. I excluded the Named Person's role within health sector (e.g. health visitors). Nevertheless, in the course of my fieldwork I came across health visitors and observed meetings in which their role was discussed. I also interviewed one Health Visitor Team Manager because she was member of a screening group whose meetings I observed. This information was fed into my data, and although I did not focus specifically on the Health Visitor's role, I found the information particularly useful in understanding the Named Person as a *service*.

With the focus on the Named Person, my research's exploration was then shaped by the following questions:

1. What does inter-agency working look like within the institutional relations of GIRFEC's implementation?
2. What do Named Persons do when they work together with other practitioners in implementing GIRFEC?

GIRFEC's proposal, as outlined in the Scottish Government's documents, suggests that changes have consequences for the work processes of the practitioners as GIRFEC is being implemented by the Local Authorities. The influence of GIRFEC on the relationships amongst agencies is not immediately obvious, but through my research I attempted to make it so. I aimed to shed light on what inter-agency

working looked like through bringing the experiences of the frontline workers to the fore.

This led me to search for a methodological approach that would allow this. I needed to be able to explain the relationships and processes that were likely to involve bureaucracy, policy documents and innovation at practice level. I considered “Institutional Ethnography” (IE), a methodological approach to help me understand such complexity (see for example Rankin and Campbell, 2006; Smith, 1990a). Key to this approach is explicating institutional relations: showing how everyday activities (which are observable) are organised by “the relations of ruling” (which are hidden). Using the approach also allowed me to map the relationships that exist in inter-agency working.

In my research, I extended the investigation of the organisational processes which would be the object of my analysis. The findings aimed to offer practitioners, managers and policy makers in the children’s services arena a tool for reflection on the relationship between policy and its implementation and how the ensuing changes are best effected. It was expected that the tool would extend my understanding of inter-agency working in children’s services.

3.3. Methodological approach and research methods

3.3.1. Applying Institutional Ethnography

“Very often, the point of qualitative study is to look at something holistically and comprehensively, to study it in its complexity, and to understand it in its context” (Punch, 1998). I have mentioned in Chapter 1 of this thesis that throughout this

research I sought to learn something *new* about children's policy, and this led me to consider *Institutional Ethnography*, a research tool which was new to me.

Literature often refers to Institutional Ethnography (IE) as a methodological approach (e.g. Campbell and Gregor, 2002; Marshall et al., 2012) but IE was not intended as such (Smith, 2005, see also Walby, 2002). Understandably, categorising IE as a methodological approach was due to introducing it as "a method of inquiry" (Smith, 2005). Furthermore, IE has also been considered more than a methodology per se because IE has an implicit theoretical framework which in turn influences the choices of methods (Walby, 2002).

I argue that *methodology* encompasses the assumptions and strategies of what to look for in order to answer my research questions. As Mason (2002) writes "methodological strategy is the logic by which you go about answering your research questions" (p30). The IE literature I read suggested various methods of conducting research. I approached the literature to find out what method generates what kind of data and how a certain method, or a combination of methods is used in researching frontline practice (e.g. de Montigny, 1995; Rankin and Campbell, 2006).

I saw the appropriateness of applying IE tools in my research because IE is intended to be the alternative sociology: that is the alternative to mainstream sociology. The IE approach brings sociology closer to the direct experiences of people that it wishes to study by starting its inquiry from people's everyday experience: "The only way of knowing a socially constructed world is knowing it from within" (Smith, 1990b, p22). Smith's argument is based on the criticism that mainstream sociology explains human behaviour using theories and concepts rather than grounding its explanation

on empirical data (Smith, 2005). Sociology eliminates *actualities* of what people do (Smith, 1990b). The term *actualities* refers to the social processes of how people know what they know. Mainstream sociology understands people's experiences by categorising them into a particular framework: a framework which is composed of established concepts and theories in Sociology. IE is "distinctive in its groundings, focus, and methodology" ("Institutional Ethnography", 2006) and so, like mainstream sociology, IE encompasses elements of a discipline. It is a discipline that places the emphasis on an approach to inquiring about things, rather than explaining things. Therefore, it poses ontological questions rather than epistemological. In fact, IE considers epistemology of secondary importance to its approach (MacLennan, 2010).

In its definition, IE is 'a method of inquiry' (e.g. Campbell, 2010; Smith, 2005, 2002; Walby, 2002). "Inquiry" is a strategy that a researcher employs to approach the empirical world; the strategy consists of a set of skills, practices and assumptions which together will influence the selection of methods of collecting and analysing data (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). IE's method of inquiry is not free from the research tools that the researcher uses to guide the ways in which the social world is approached. Therefore, the researcher needs to reflect on the use of methods (e.g. observation, interview, document analysis) in generating data.

Not to get caught in the debate of seeing IE as Sociology, a method of inquiry, or a methodology, I was content with using IE as a *critical approach* in my research. I recognised its focus for every method I chose. I recognised its conceptual underpinnings and how it influenced the reading and analysis of data. I adopted IE because it offers a discovery of 'coordinated activities' (Smith, 2006) through taking

a closer look at the often taken-for-granted activities of practitioners (such as filling out forms, attending meetings, communicating with other practitioners). Nevertheless, I found challenges in applying IE during my fieldwork and analysis. I will discuss the challenges in Section 3.4. As discussed in Chapter 2, the ‘coordinated’ part refers to organisation of observed activities (i.e. meetings, talks); IE goes beyond the obvious meetings and talks. IE does not suggest the researcher comes into the field with preconceptions. Although this idea suited my situation well, it made my exploration challenging. After five meetings and a couple of informal talks I realised I had taken notes too often (i.e. I had tried to record conversations throughout the meetings) without knowing on what to focus. I did not know what to look for or on whom I should focus my observations. Although I did have an interest in the role of the Named Person (and of the Lead Professional at first), the position at that time did not ‘exist’: the Named Person provision was not yet statutory.

Although I had no clear idea then of what to look or to whom to talk because the provision was not yet statutory; however, I had hoped to be able to make the connections between what I had observed with the Named Person’s roles. Unable to do so, I came back to my original plan and tried to map what people did. I tried to find some kind of pattern in the activities that “informants” had experienced. “Informants” will be used from this point forward to refer to research participants.

In inter-agency working, these activities are coordinated. It follows that there are other sets of activities involved such as how to take the minutes, how to set the agenda, how to make sure actions agreed during the meetings are followed up. These are what the informants knew and told me (and also what I observed). I am arguing there is second kind of ‘coordination’: that of coordinating these known activities.

This second ‘coordination’ was to be made the fruit of my research. I inquired how activities (i.e. meetings, filling in and sending forms, consultation) of inter-agency working were organised.

Further into my fieldwork, the Named Person started to become a topic in meetings and soon there was a newly appointed GIRFEC Development Officer with a remit to ensure that the Education sector was ready to implement the Named Person service. In addition, there was a training for practitioners to take up the Named Person role. Following this development, the Named Person then became the focus of my research undertakings. Applying IE in my research has been done in this unique context, and I will show how I did it in details in a later part of this chapter. However, here I need to address the issue of *standpoint* in IE. As discussed in Chapter 2, “standpoint” is the point from which the inquiry into institutional order began (Campbell, 2010).

Taking the “standpoint” of the role of the Named Person to inquire into the procedures of inter-agency working was tricky because, as I mentioned before, nobody had taken up the role officially as a Named Person, and so I realised that I could not use the “standpoint position” in my research (initially). As I was able to map the complexities of procedures and processes that shaped professionals working together, I was able to locate the Named Person (as both service and person) within that map. This discovery process also allowed me to understand how professionals’ judgement and confidence contributed to and was influenced by those procedures and processes.

I need to acknowledge that reliance on local informants and documents in accordance with IE led to partiality in the choice of the settings in this study and hence the kinds of data gathered. For example, in Section 3.4.1 I discuss how I was guided by the managers' suggestions and the relevant local authority document on GIRFEC implementation, to start with Locality Forums. By following such guidance, I thus did not explore other inter-agency forums for children and their families, undertaken in other spaces. Further, children and their families did not attend the Locality Forums and, therefore, did not feature as research participants. The IE approach thus led me to a certain partiality in the choice of setting to study, but also to the one that was locally identified as the core space for inter-agency working as part of GIRFEC implementation.

How I came to gather my data will be explained further in Section 3.6 when I talk about how I generated data, and my analysis followed the sequence of my approach in the field. Before doing so, I present an overview of the methods I applied in my fieldwork.

3.3.2. Case Study Selection

The IE approach did not aim to sample the population regarding certain social phenomenon. Participants in the work or organisational processes, where social and ruling relations are organised, are informants for generating knowledge on the relations under study. The IE methodological approach shares the same purpose of doing case study research. Case studies can investigate organisational processes (Yin, 1994). Doing case study research also means trying to understand how the people being studied see things (Stake, 1995). The revelatory aspect of my research supports the rationale for choosing one case study (see Yin, 1994). Moreover, my

research focussed on everyday situations in which theoretical elements can be found from studying the social processes, which fits the *common case* reason in choosing a single case study (Yin, 2014). My research is based on one case study in one Local Authority in Scotland: Ballian (pseudonym is used). I need to make clear that the term *case* here is not the same as the one I will use in Chapter 5: Jimmy's case is a documented short story of a young person that was discussed in the meetings that I observed.

Since my research was within the context of the implementation of GIRFEC, it was necessary to conduct the fieldwork in a Local Authority that had been implementing GIRFEC. I mentioned in Chapter 1 that before undertaking the research I talked to people (i.e. Council staff, Scottish Government officials, practitioners, academics and the staff of Non-Governmental Organisations) to learn of the emerging issues around children's policies in Scotland. These 'scoping interviews' led me to GIRFEC and to the Local Authority where I finally did my research. I interviewed the staff of two Councils that had been implementing GIRFEC: Ballian Council (pseudonym is used) and Highland Council. Highland Pathfinder for GIRFEC development had been frequently mentioned in the literature I read (e.g. Scottish Government, 2008, 2010), and so I went there to talk to one member of staff. From that conversation, I could see how GIRFEC, as it was presented in the Scottish Government publications at that time, was very much based by the model developed in Highland Council. The Council's GIRFEC implementation strategy had been built on successful inter-agency working (Statham, 2011). Because I wanted to investigate the 'developing' of inter-agency working in the GIRFEC implementation, I

perceived the claim of Highland Council's success made them unfit for my research interest.

The Scottish Government's evaluation of GIRFEC implementation in all 32 Local Authorities (2013) as well as the HM Inspectors assessment on education systems' readiness to use GIRFEC approaches in 11 Local Authorities (Education Scotland, 2012) suggested the nationwide implementation of GIRFEC but with varied progress. Based on these reports I could not discern which Local Authority to approach. The other Council that I approached during my scoping interview was Ballian Council. The Service Director that I interviewed in Ballian invited me to follow up with her after I had clearer research focus. An invitation to follow up with Ballian Council was a window of opportunity that I just could not ignore. My research was going to observe people in their work setting, where bureaucracy plays a part, and therefore access is a privilege and an opportunity (Buchanan et al., 1988).

Choosing a case study is a careful undertaking, because "a case may later turn out not to be the case it was thought to be at the outset" (Yin, 2014). I looked for a Council that had a GIRFEC implementation system in place, had multi-agency work, and which would claim it to be 'working'. I found Ballian Council met the main criteria based on the *Services for Children and Young People in Ballian* report of the Care Inspectorate in January 2014. This public report shows that GIRFEC is one of the themes of the Single Ballian Plan¹⁴; staff understand the roles and responsibilities of the Lead Professional and Named Person and all of those working directly with

¹⁴ This is Ballian's Single Outcome Agreement. It is an agreement between the Scottish Government and Community Planning Partnerships which sets out how they will work towards improving outcomes for Scotland's people in a way that reflects local circumstances and priorities (Care Inspectorate, 2014).

children and young people have received training on the GIRFEC approach and are “employing a much stronger focus on wellbeing in their work” (p10). Ballian also has guidelines for implementing GIRFEC. The guidelines make reference to other relevant Scottish Government policy documents. Moreover, this Council has multi-agency forums to discuss the most appropriate support available following the assessment of children’s needs using the GIRFEC framework. The forums were called Locality Forums, which consisted of professionals from different agencies (e.g. school, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services [CAMHS], Children and Families team of the Council).

The *case study* research method has been questioned as to its analytical use: whether it can do more than just providing descriptive data (Blaikie, 2010). Another criticism is about its approach, which is seen less as methodological as practical (Blaikie, 2010). Here, applying the IE methodological approach using multi-methods in the way I have done in this research, I would hopefully demonstrate a robust research design, as I will demonstrate below. Using multi-methods flexibly and robustly in answering research questions could actually maximise understanding on the topic under study (Snyder, 2012).

3.3.3. Preliminary Fieldwork

As the context of my research and the location was unfamiliar to me (i.e. Scottish Children’s Services and Ballian Council), I did preliminary fieldwork when entering the field. “Preliminary fieldwork” is looking for ways to identify relations and institutional work processes that are shaping the frontline workers’ everyday work (Campbell and Gregor, 2002). The idea of preliminary fieldwork was to make me familiar with the situation I wanted to learn about. This endeavour has two thrusts:

identifying a place to begin an inquiry, and knowing my own position within it. I had hoped that through observing one Locality Forum meeting (to begin with), I would be able to start identifying who I would like to talk to. From these talks or interviews, I started identifying information in the implicit work processes. As I became familiar with my research setting, the direction of my discovery process became clearer. Then I extended my investigation to organisational processes, which I used in my research. This means that I, as the Ethnographer, looked beyond the frontline setting to the translocal setting, where I was interested in policies and practices that regulated the day-to-day practice of the practitioners (DeVault and McCoy, 2012). For me, this entailed looking closer at the documents that were used or discussed to facilitate the processes of these inter-agency working.

3.3.4. Research Methods

Ethnography is useful to generate a deeper understanding of a particular topic, to gain multiple perspectives, and to look at processes (Fine et al., 2009). I applied IE, which allows me to scrutinise practices of inter-agency working by looking at processes and tensions within and around the practices that I observe.

Institutional ethnographers should be able to recognise and analyse the manifestation of power within the inter-agency working processes in which the research participants engage. They are “knower, located in the everyday world and finding meaning there” (Campbell and Gregor, 2002, p11). For this reason, I endeavoured to dig deeper in the discovery process of my research and this affected my choices of methods and case selection. I used multi-methods: observations, interviews and document analysis.

3.3.4.1. Observations

Observations are core to ethnography. In IE, observations focus on naturally occurring data in order to study practices inside institutions (DeVault and McCoy, 2002). Consistent with this, I was interested in interactions, activities and the way people interpret things (see Mason, 2002). In a setting that is new to the Institutional Ethnographer, observations should constitute a significant amount of the work (Campbell and Gregor, 2002). Therefore, observations were my main method during the early stages of my fieldwork.

I used my initial observations to get acquainted with how Locality Forums worked, who were involved, and what was discussed. Most of my observations were of meetings, which are central to the function of the locality forums. The informants also often referred to the meetings as “forums”. The meetings that I observed were structured, which means discussions went through the agendas with the purpose of getting at least one action point for each case that was discussed.

Due to the nature of the meetings I observed, I was able to take notes, but consciously not writing when someone said “*not to minute*”. I know the request was not meant for me but for the note-taker. My decision to stop was part of building relationships in an ethnographic research setting (see Mason, 2002). I understood that informants could have assumptions towards a researcher and I had hoped the assumption was: “*this researcher has a genuine interest to learn*”; and as a researcher I had hoped to find informants with whom mutual trust could exist (see Wax, 1971). I did not join in conversations, but I showed how I participated in my observation (Ingold, 2014) by being aware of the ‘rules’ of the setting I was in.

In taking notes I was able to write sentences, but occasionally still wrote in jottings. I was using an A6 notebook. I chose that size because I felt it was appropriate to use in the meetings after the first observation. The first time I attended a meeting I brought two notebooks of different sizes: A6 and A7. I observed people using bigger notebooks and papers on the table, but I was comfortable in choosing the A6 one. I put the notebook on my lap and not on top of the table, to facilitate note-taking and tried to be discreet. Mason (2002) suggests that researchers should decide how they want to be 'accepted' in their research setting and my note taking decision was mostly done on the spot, after observing those around me. I had also prepared in advance by bringing two notebooks.

I used a star (★) mark for things I thought of, for my feelings, or for things I wanted to know more about. I used double quotation marks for exact words and kept the names of who said what. My notes usually began with name of the meeting, location, date, time it began, who was attending. Further on in my notes I would use initials to represent who said what. Because the meetings discussed children, I originally only wrote down child #1 and so on, but decided to use their real names for the purpose of easier tracking. When I typed up my notes I did not use the children's real names. I never show these notes to anyone and have a locked drawer at the office to store them.

Observations of Locality Forum meetings allowed me to *be* in the situation that assumed practitioners were working together. This first-hand experience is paramount in IE inquiry (Campbell and Gregor, 2002). However, observations in meetings did not make it possible for me to ask immediately about some things that I did not understand because I did not want to disrupt the natural setting of the

meetings. Therefore, I needed to use other methods. Observations led me to choose other methods. For example, in my notes I marked when I would like to know more, or noted “I want to ask...*informant's name*....about this”. Consistently, my observation fieldnotes were analysed in relation to data from interviews and document analysis. The following sub-section will discuss the “interview” as an equally important method in this research.

3.3.4.2. Interviews

In IE, the selection of interviewees is not predetermined (Campbell and Gregor, 2002). The selection was based on observations. I identified people I would like to talk to as the inquiry progressed and I had started to ask questions from my observations. There were two kinds of interview in my research. The first kind was an *informal talk*. It is the unstructured kind of interview. The second kind was a *formal interview*. It was a semi-structured interview, and “oriented to sequences of interconnected activities” (DeVault and McCoy, 2002, p757). They informed the observations and led me to reading documents.

The informal talks took place in different settings. It could be a ‘catching up’ meeting after a certain Locality Forum, a lift back to town, or a conversation over a document or computer system. I did not have a predetermined set of questions for each informal talk as I did not have enough knowledge on the subject (Agar, 2008). What I had in mind was a rather general topic to begin a conversation, such as *how the System works*. The way I took notes differed for each of these settings. The ‘catching up’ could be right after the Locality Forum meeting or at a scheduled time. I was able to jot down words during these talks. Afterwards, in the bus I typed up some more notes. These talks satisfied my curiosity (mostly because I had needed to

clarify some terminologies or issues that I had not been familiar with during the meeting).

The formal interviews were semi-structured. A semi-structured interview has the qualities of being flexible and yet purposive (Bryman, 2012). The questions in my interview schedules were built on information from observations and reading related documents. They, therefore, would vary for each informant. Nevertheless, there were a couple of general questions that I asked each interviewee¹⁵, such as: “*Can you tell me briefly about your job?*” and “*How did you get involved in the Forum?*”. I had prepared interview scripts in advance for each of the interviews. One of the interviewees requested the questions be sent in advance, and one other requested to see the list of questions at the start of the interview.

3.3.4.3. Document Analysis

Why does IE look at documents? Within an institutional context, the people read texts, trying to understand them and possibly making transformations in practice (Campbell, 2010). Texts coordinate activities and components of social relations (Smith, 2006). Texts illuminate how translocal relations work. So in IE, the ethnographer is also interested in how the texts are used. IE looks for “relations of ruling” and how the relations are expressed in the text (DeVault and McCoy, 2012), and also how the texts mediate the relations as “texts don’t achieve the capacity to regulate just by their existence” (Smith, 2006, p81).

All the actions that relate to the service providers and users, managers, and policy, are *text-mediated*. A text-mediated discourse, where concepts and terminologies are

¹⁵ See Appendix 7 for an example of my interview schedule.

introduced, can also be the texts under investigation (DeVault and McCoy, 2012).

This fits my research, since the GIRFEC related documents from the Ballian Council and the Scottish Government mentioned “working together” frequently. Provisions of GIRFEC, which regulate what kind of approach different participants in children’s services must apply, are text-mediated through the National guidelines to implementing GIRFEC, such as “*A guide to implementing Getting it right for every child*” (Scottish Government, 2012a). Each Local Authority adopts the guidelines and their own ways of regulating relevant services through systems and management. For example, the Wellbeing Concerns Form (Appendix 10) that was introduced by the Ballian Council as a standardised recording tool across professionals was a document that was constantly mentioned in different meetings and interviews and later on helped me to find clues about how the Named Person’s roles were being organised. The form includes the SHANARRI indicators that can be found in the National guidelines. I did not use all such documents in my investigation. I used the ones that the informants referred to, and which were considered to be providing information on the Council’s Policy for Action – copies of which were provided by Charles (pseudonym is used), my contact person.

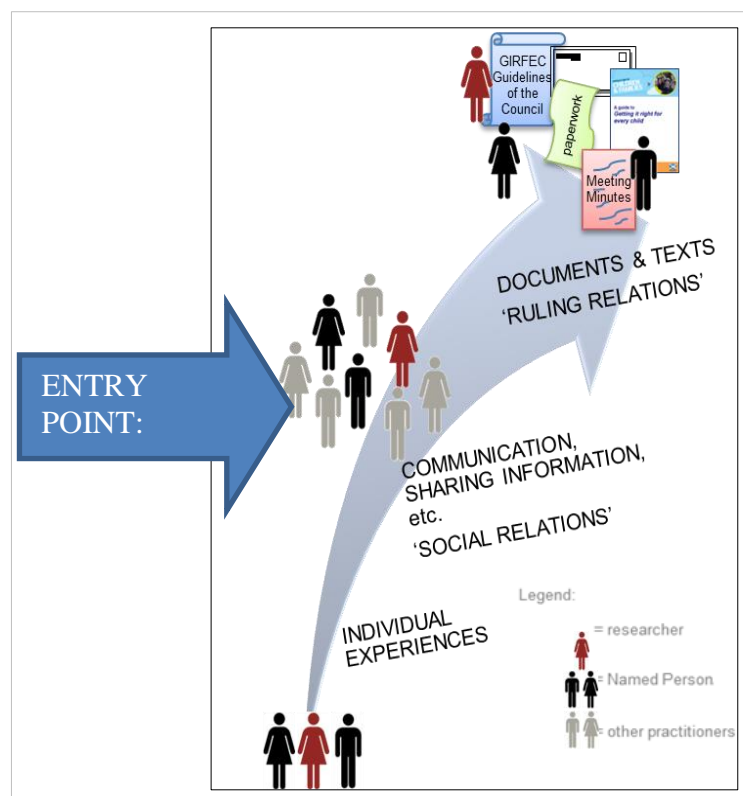
My approach to these documents (referred to above) varied from looking at their production, use and interpretation or their content. This is because the purpose of looking at documents was to understand how these policies led to a coordination of the activities that I had observed or was told about by the informants. As *ruling relations* is key to IE, texts have been considered as facilitating *ruling*. I need to clarify what I mean by documents here. They were: a referral form to Locality Forums, Referral Forms to the Children and Families, Guidelines from the Council,

Strategic Plans from the Council, and Minutes of meetings. The referral form to Locality Forums pointed me particularly to the Council's database system and from it I was able to understand how data was then brought into agendas of meetings. I was not given access to any referral forms to read myself because of the confidential information (e.g. names of children) they contain. However, I was allowed to look at them together with my informants, with the purpose of understanding their use. As IE suggests, the ethnographer may need to sit down with the informant to discuss the text: what is in it and how the informant works with it (DeVault and McCoy, 2012). I will elaborate more on how I worked with documents in Section 3.6.3.

3.4. Fieldwork

3.4.1. Entry Point

My fieldwork began after gaining the approval of the Ballian Council's GIRFEC Board for my research proposal. The board also appointed one contact person,



“Charles”, who was a Planning Officer. I was then invited to a meeting in which I, Charles, and Managers of Children and Families discussed how to take things forward following the Board's approval. In the meeting, I explained my

Figure 1. My Entry Point

intention to observe practices of working together, interview professionals and (at the time) shadowing a family support worker when they were home visiting. It was suggested to me that I would first observe the Locality Forums. I recalled that these Forums are named as ‘key structures’ for implementing GIRFEC, in *Ballian’s GIRFEC Implementation Framework* (Ballian Council, 2010 – original title of the document is changed to preserve anonymity). Judging the relevance of the locality forums to the practice of working together and GIRFEC implementation, I agreed to start my observations there.

As a follow up of that meeting I was put in touch with four staff from the Children and Families team, which is part of the Social Work department at Ballian Council. Later I found out that three of them were Children and Families Team Leaders and one was a Duty Social Work Team Leader. While I attended Locality Forums, these Children and Families Team Leaders became my *gatekeepers*. Specifically, I worked closely with Amber and Helen (pseudonym is used), two (out of 4) Team Leaders. Each team leader manages one locality. Amber managed the “Snows” locality and Helen managed the “Robin” locality.

As mentioned earlier, I began with “preliminary fieldwork”. I was unfamiliar with the work of Scotland’s children’s services, but as I have explained earlier I came to Locality Forums meetings in order to become familiar with inter-agency working in children’s services within the Local Authority. A “Primary School Locality Forum” was the name I gave to the multi-agency forum involving Primary School Head Teachers, chaired by Helen (Children and Families Team Leader) in the Robin locality; and “Secondary School Locality Forum” for multi-agency forum at one secondary school in Snows locality, chaired by the school’s Deputy Head Teacher

and involved Amber (Children and Families Team Leader). During this preliminary fieldwork, and as my fieldwork progressed, I also observed other multi-agency meetings. The full list of my observations can be found in Table 3 on page 116.

Initially I wanted to shadow the Named Person (and also the Lead Professional at that time). Given that the Named Person was not yet 'chosen', I was still trying to identify who I could shadow. In my first observations at meetings, I soon discovered that this task would be challenging because a single person could not enact the role in the context of the Named Person's role to coordinate inter-agency working. I identified more than one person whose work mirrored the Named Person's role. My informants were reluctant to state who would become the Named Person. I stayed on observing the Locality Forums and in so doing these complexities had given me an insight into the difficulties of implementing the Named Person policy. Before going into this process in depth, I need to explain about the "informants" and ethical considerations of my research.

3.4.2. The Informants

My fieldwork at Ballian was conducted from January to September 2015.

Participants of my research were members of the Locality Forums, GIRFEC Board and GIRFEC Strategic and Operational Groups that I met during my observations. Therefore, the participants are varied in background. They included a Deputy Head Teacher, Guidance Teachers, Community Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) worker, School Nurse, Voluntary Sector staff, Community Police Officer, Lifelong Learning and Employability staff, the Council's Children and Families Team Leaders and Head of Services. My interaction with each of the informants varied depending on the number of contacts that I had with them. Most

contacts that I had were with two of the Children's Services Team Leaders of the Council, and members of the Locality Forums. The three tables in "Section 3.6. Generating Data" provide more information about my informants.

3.4.3. Ethical Considerations

3.4.3.1. Informed Consent

I consulted with my gatekeepers (the Children and Families Team Leaders) about seeking the Forums members consent for me to observe their meetings. It was decided that my gatekeepers would introduce me at the start of the meetings if they were leading them, but asked me to introduce myself as well. Only in a couple of meetings do I remember the gatekeeper asking whether or not participants minded if I were there. Most of times the introduction was to inform the participants. In the first situation, consent was given by nods or simply "no problem". Once, one of the gatekeepers sent an email to the meeting leader into which I was copied. In the email, the gatekeeper said she would bring me along and ended by asking that she be informed if there were a problem. I also introduced myself in the Forums meetings and distributed Research Information Leaflets (Appendix 6). Sometimes, the leaflets were sent in advance to the gatekeepers and circulated along with the meeting agenda. In meetings where people showed up late, I tried to catch them with my information leaflet and explain why I was there, after the meeting. I also constantly gave updates in person and/or by email to my contact person and Team Leaders. In the middle of my fieldwork I gave them a folder containing updates on my research. Consent alone is not enough, maintaining a good relationship with informants is also crucial in ethnography (Emerson et al., 2011).

For formal interviews, consent to be interviewed was ensured through the following process. I asked the Forum's meeting participant immediately after the meeting, and then followed that up by an email. For some participants who I had missed after the meeting, I approached them by email. I attached an information sheet and consent form in the emails I sent. Four people that I emailed were not interviewed. Three of them had previously agreed to be interviewed with two of them confirmed they read my emails and would get back to me, but never did. Two people never replied my email. I had the phone number of the four people I emailed, but when I tried to phone up, I could not get through. This situation was not ideal, although I realised it was possible for those who had said yes after the meetings to change their minds (Emerson et al., 2011).

I asked a staff member of the Council if I could interview him but he declined. I asked if I could attend a multi-agency meeting hosted by one voluntary sector who worked with families affected by substance misuse, but was denied. Instead they met me after the meeting to give me an opportunity to ask questions and take notes. I considered this as an *informal talk*.

Overt access is gained through gatekeepers, and is common when doing research in 'organisational setting' (Silverman, 2013). However, I did not conduct my research into one particular Council (organisational setting), but I worked with several agencies within Ballian Council, whose staff I met in the Locality Forum meetings. This is similar to doing fieldwork within a community. It is important to get approval from people on the 'top' (Wax, 1971). However, researchers need to be mindful of not getting too close with such leaders because that can limit the scope of fieldwork. If the researcher is too close to the leaders, it can be difficult to manage their

expectations toward the research. In particular, if the research seeks the participation of community members rather than the leaders, such closeness may limit the members' participation.

3.4.3.2. Anonymity and Confidentiality

Pseudonyms are used in transcriptions and typed fieldnotes. Any identifiable information was removed as well. Research participants were informed that information discussed and disclosed would be kept confidential and I would not use real names in my thesis. However, there was a note for an exception in the case of concerns arising regarding child protection issues. In such a case, as I wrote in the Participant Information Leaflet, I would follow procedures outlined in Ballian Council's "Inter-agency Child Protection Procedures". The guidelines explain procedures to be taken should there be observations or reports on child protection concerns (e.g. abuse, neglect) or children at risk of harm. The observations here refer to what I found during the course of my fieldwork, not concerns that were already dealt with by the professionals. In addition, I consulted with Charles, my contact person, regarding who I was to contact in case I had concerns for the wellbeing of the Council staff I worked with. Charles gave me the contact details of the Children and Families Team Managers (whom I had met before in the first meeting I had with the Council). Charles added that if I would like to email them I should not include any sensitive information i.e. anything that could identify a child or family that Children and Families were working with in my emails.

3.5. Reflexivity

In ethnographic research, “reflexivity involves the recognition that an *account of reality* does not simply mirror reality but, rather, creates or constitutes as real in the first place whatever it describes” (Emerson et al., 2011). I agree but I also think the ethnographer’s account is unavoidably subjective. Selections on what to observe, to write down, and ways to interpret rely very much on the ethnographer’s intent, as much as skill (Emerson et al., 2011). This reflexivity includes recognising the assumptions of the ethnographer on the social world that she is in.

In qualitative research, “reflexivity is important in striving for objectivity and neutrality” (Snape and Spencer, 2003, p20). This does not suggest qualitative research is free from researcher’s bias, however, it is possible to measure objectivity if researcher’s personal beliefs, values, background and experience are confessed. The emphasis is on recognising how our own background, experience, and values influence the way we do our research. This can be done in giving as much detail as possible when explaining our inquiry so as to enable readers to judge the ‘objectivity’ of our research (see also Mason, 2002). IE emphasises experience, constructed in ethnographic undertaking, as a ‘dialogue’. This puts emphasis on the exchanges between the researcher and the participant. Reflexivity is thus crucial for the researchers to reflect on how their role in the ‘dialogue’, influence the participants’ story (representation of their experience) (Emerson et al., 2011).

Blaikie (2010) notes that “reflexivity applies to the process of designing social research as much as to the research process itself” (p54). Prior to designing this research I had done scoping interviews that led me to think GIRFEC was an

interesting topic for research. My interest was related to two things: problem and expectation. Problems around GIRFEC's implementation were highlighted but there was also a high expectation that it would progress successfully. On reflection, the enactment of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 in which the Named Person would be a statutory role, provided another challenge in doing this research. Before commencing fieldwork, while exchanging emails with member staff of the Ballian Council, I realised that there was an assumption from several staff that my research would evaluate the role of the Named Person. In following up with the Council this had been clarified and I was asked to recognise that the Named Person service was at the planning and implementation stage and not yet statutory. This made me careful in framing my research. During my fieldwork I did not introduce myself as doing research "about the Named Person" and my information sheets did not mention it either. Instead I used "understanding the process of working together between practitioners in children's services". As talks about the role of a Named Person began to emerge in meetings, I began to use it more in conversations and interviews with the informants.

I kept a research diary on an electronic file. Often I put an entry at the end of a day when I had had observations or interviews. I wrote about how I felt in the field, what questions I had, and my assumptions. Such a research diary is useful for the researcher to recognise his/her own account of the research process (Agar, 2008). I put an arrow (→) mark after a sentence to indicate my perception or assumption. I also made entries when I had thought of an idea, or when I got an insight from something I had heard or read. The notes from Informal Talks were also entered in the diary. When I reread my notes, I made notes on the side of the paper. These notes

can be related to my research topic or methodology (see Figure 2 below). In particular, as I began my data analysis this exercise helped me to see the process of arriving at my understanding of my data. Taking notes in ethnographic research has been noted as the process in which the ethnographer looks back at the process while trying to understand the themes emerging in the research (Snyder, 2012).

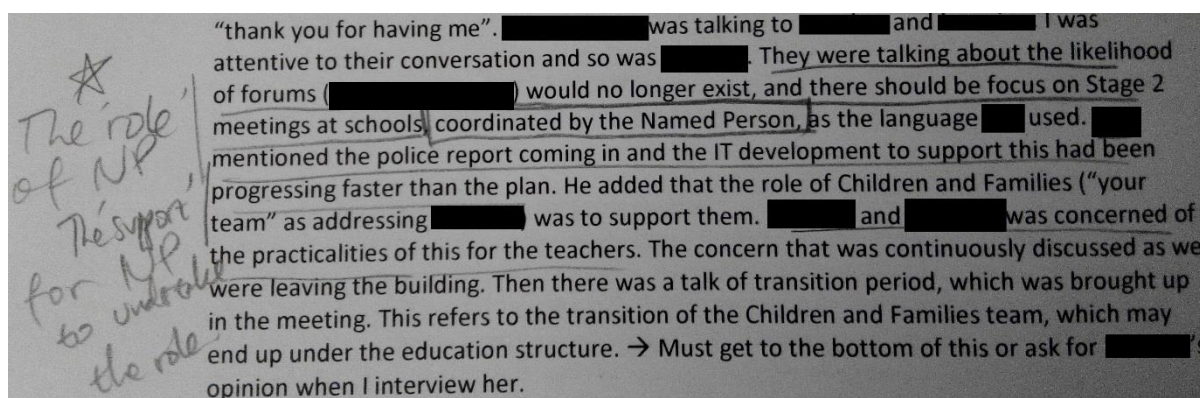


Figure 2. An excerpt from my research diary

As an alternative Sociology, applying IE could release oneself from the confinement of conceptual frameworks that were recognisable within the discipline (Sociology).

So if I am not a sociologist, what am I releasing myself from? What is it that I have learned that would potentially confine my insights? After conducting this research I saw that IE did not liberate me because to liberate needs to have an object:

“liberating from.....”. I see that IE allowed me to ask ‘freely’ questions both informed and intuitive, it led me to answer my research questions. As I went and met people and observed and chatted, it allowed me to ‘wait’ for the *aha* moment, the moment of sudden recognition. Using IE helped me to discover the Named Person’s roles were made by different professionals’ activities.

When I met the GIRFEC Development Officer, I subsequently tried to find out more about her work by attending meetings she was at or had organised and by

interviewing her. Thus what I had learned about GIRFEC and the Named Person, started to come together and make sense. What I had mapped out became more meaningful. The nature of doing ethnography is unpredictable (Emerson et al., 2011). I saw this happening because I could not find the Named Person and yet during the pre-fieldwork correspondence with Charles and the Director of Children's Services, I was informed that Ballian was at the stage of 'designing and implementing' the Named Person. It was an unsettling situation, which then changed over time.

Throughout my fieldwork, I was trying to be "reflexive" on the ethics of what I was doing. My use of the word "reflexive" refers to reflecting on one's practice and knowledge and on the effects of judgements on the practice and knowledge (Taylor and White, 2001). My research is *overt*, as shown by the ways I gained access to the Locality Forums. My informants were also 'helpful' in making public the fact that I was doing research. For example, in one Forum meeting the Deputy Head Teacher mentioned that she had been interviewed by me. On another occasion a gatekeeper (i.e. the Children and Families Team Leader) mentioned in the Forum that I would like to interview some of the Forum members for my research. Throughout, I kept my data confidential, and did not reveal any information obtained from my informants and gatekeepers to anybody else.

Literature of the ethics on carrying out ethnographic research would discuss concerns regarding participant's consent and when the researcher should not be taking notes, with little said about when the researcher *should start* taking notes. I worked hard to fit in with the Locality Forums' ways of doing things. The minute I received approval from the GIRFEC Board to do my research, I thought I had gained 'consent' to conduct my research. Later, as I reflected on the whole process of

getting multiple access throughout my fieldwork, I questioned how far-reaching that ‘approval’ actually was. In practice, I did not assume I had consent from all the participants. In Locality Forums, I consulted with the Children and Families team member (who went to the meeting) about how to get consent from the participants. I introduced myself and explained briefly about my research in the Forums. I distributed my Research Information leaflets to the participants (see Appendix 6).

In requesting documents from Charles (my contact person), such as blank Referral Form or Ballian’s Children Services Plan, I had to wait until he had received approval to give me them. Realising the need for ongoing consent I periodically sent updates to Charles and Children and Families Team Leaders by email or in person. Halfway through my fieldwork I sent them a folder of an update of my research asking for comments.

I also struggled with this ethical issue: in interviewing professionals who had also attended the meetings I used the children’s real names. However, I did not seek consent from the children. The names had been mentioned by the professionals in the meetings and I used them only in interviews with professionals who had been working with these children.

3.6. Generating data

There is a difference in the ways in which I participated in generating information from observations and interviews both formal and informal, but in both, the informants that provided me with information about my research setting are experts (Strathern, 1999). The observations and informal talks also led me to explore a new ‘site’ (documents) and to identify people I would like to interview. The documents

then became reference points in my observations or prompts in interviews or informal talks. The way I applied these different methods is ‘one informing the other’ (see Figure 3).

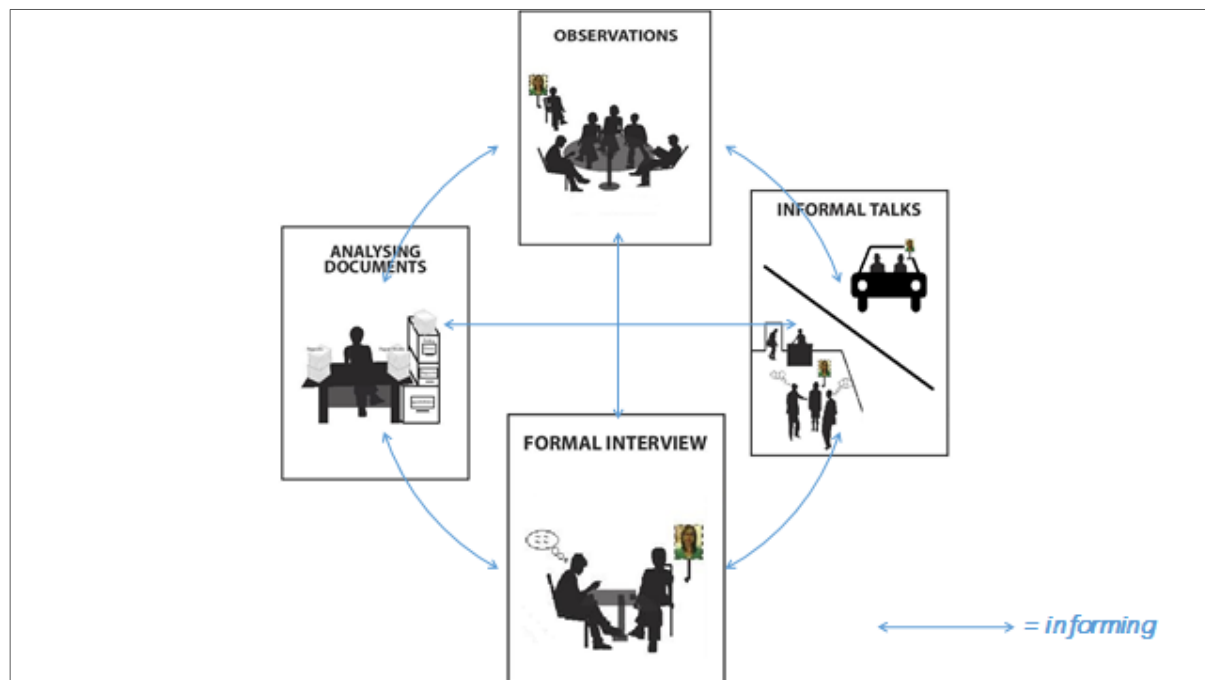


Figure 3. Research methods

3.6.1. Observations to locality forums and other meetings

As mentioned in Section 3.3.4.1 my observations focussed on what happened in Locality Forums meetings. My observations were of what people talked about, how they spoke, what kind of information people shared, the kinds of documents from which they read, who said more and who said less, and their gestures (e.g. nodding, writing, reading). I was listening, watching, taking notes but not joining the conversation. I was an *outside observer*. But further into my fieldwork I began to share (silently) the frustration of the participants when some on-going cases were discussed. I noticed this when I realised I had stopped taking notes and was just paying attention to their conversations. I was becoming emotionally involved. This

shows I was an *insider* at the time (Spradley, 1980). Looking back, this happened because my participation level changed over time. From a passive observer I began asking questions about the participants' comments during the meetings, in informal talks and semi-structured interviews outside the meetings. Also, as I interacted with them, I gradually became more active in my observations. This does not mean I began to talk during meetings, but the notes I took became more meaningful as I could connect what the participants had told me with what I had observed. As a result, my accounts of the meetings became in depth (Agar, 2008).

An ethnographer may feel writing up notes is a burden after few weeks or months in the field (Emerson et al., 2011). I experienced that. Such experience led to selective notetaking, on what is new. For me it led to shorter fieldnotes and being more selective in what dialogues I noted down. I recognised that from my observations I could start drawing a map of what people did when they worked together. The gaps of information about this process were then complemented with interviews. But I was also interested in how the informants coordinated what they did and what they knew. As suggested in IE I used my observations to pick up clues that could raise questions on what shaped meetings and communication procedures as I saw them. For example, while observing the meetings I was curious about the paper that was on the table: what it was, where they came from, what was in it, who prepared it, what they wrote on it. This led me to re-read the Ballian Council's framework for implementing GIRFEC.

In all meetings, I took notes and remained quiet, except when I introduced myself and my research at the start of each meeting. Looking back, in my first observations my notes style were 'who is saying what': who refers to the person and his/her

organisation affiliation and what refers to the kinds of wording people use (e.g. questions, disagreement). I soon realised that in recording the conversations, it was difficult to record the tone of voice, and yet this is important because it gives meaning to their words. Therefore, I wrote down words such as, “it seems he agrees” or “in his opinion” to show my interpretation (see Agar 2008) of the way they said their words.

At the beginning I had problems with writing up my notes. At first I tried to type up my notes from my notebook onto the computer. I found this method did not work well for me. It took me three working days to finish typing up one observation note. While I was typing I would ask myself questions and add comments to my notes (Clifford 1990). Also, when I came across a new topic, I would often search for more information on it. However, with more meetings this typing up notes soon became inefficient and I fell behind. Then I changed to transferring my notes into neat handwriting which I found it faster than typing. For example, it took me three hours to write down a two-hour observation. I used A4 notebooks for my fieldnotes. I connected the sentences and jottings from my A6 notebook into full fieldnotes. I recalled what had happened at the meetings when I used the sentences and jottings to write my fieldnotes. I found that this transferring process made my fieldnotes more comprehensive, because the process allowed me to make sense of what had happened. “*What comes after this scene?*”. The daunting transfer process and limitation of long-term memory are the reason that fieldnotes are problematic in ethnography (Agar, 2008). Nevertheless, as a novice institutional ethnographer, doing observations as much as possible is advised (Campbell and Gregor, 2002), and so at first I relied very much on my fieldnotes as my main source of data.

In total I have done 25 observations of one GIRFEC training session and meetings of Locality Forums, Screening Groups, as well as of meetings that my informants referred to as ‘operational’ (i.e. *the GIRFEC Practice and Training Group*) and ‘strategic’. Examples of strategic meetings referred to are *the Named Person Implementation Group* and *the GIRFEC Partnership Board*. Observations allowed me to identify sites (e.g. meetings and forms) for inquiry. Focussing on those sites I was able to map the processes following a meeting to track the forms in order to show how different agencies, particularly schools and Children and Families team, work together. This became apparent when I created the map. While I was making the map I found gaps or things that were not clear from my previous observations. Then I sought clarification of those things during formal interviews and informal talks.

I have mentioned earlier that I focussed on Locality Forum meetings, and Table 3 shows the Locality Forums and other meetings that I observed. During my observations I became aware of other multi-agency meetings, such as Review Meetings that are chaired by a Guidance Teacher and involve all services/professionals relevant to a young person and which are usually held every six weeks in the school. The carers/parents and the young person usually attend, unless a professionals-only meeting is desired for a good reason. I did not choose to observe these meetings because I was trying to stay closer to the professionals (e.g. Children and Families Team Leader and Deputy Head Teacher) whom I observed conducting elements of the Named Person’s role. Further in my fieldwork I became aware that in the Robin Area, Helen (the Children and Families Team Leader) had started to develop a Naught to Five Locality Forum involving, amongst others, health

visitors, and therefore I asked to be allowed to observe their meetings. I was not able to gain access because Helen considered the forum was still a pilot and thus not ready for observation. Instead, I interviewed her about the forum.

Table 3. List of Observations

Note:

- Pseudonyms are used for names.
- Pseudonyms are also used for the organiser and for other identifiable information.
- Locality Forums are marked in shaded grey.

Forums	Organiser	Number of Observations	Attendees	Notes
Screening Group for Non-Offending Children and Young People	Ballian Council	3	Duty Social Work Team Leader (chair), Voluntary sector staff, Health Visitor Team Manager, Housing staff, and a member of the Council's administrative staff (note taker).	Aim: focussed on identifying existing support and take actions on police concerns about children, young people and their families.
Screening Group for Offending Children and Young People	Ballian Council	3	Children and Families Team Leader (chair), a member of the Council's administrative staff (note taker), Youth Justice Police Officer, Community Safety Officer, Voluntary sector staff.	
Substance Misuse Screening Group	Ballian Council	1	Children and Families Locality Manager (chair), a member of the Council's administrative staff (note taker), Voluntary Sector Staff, NHS staff.	Aim: focussed on identifying existing support and take actions for children and young people within families with substance misuse.

Forums	Organiser	Number of Observations	Attendees	Notes
Secondary School Locality Forum (SSF)	Sisters High School	4	Depute Head Teacher (chair), Teacher (note taker), Support for Learning Teacher, Children and Families team (Team Leader or Family Support Worker or Education Welfare Officer), Guidance teachers, CAMHS worker, School Nurse, School Leaver Advisor, Voluntary Sector staff, Community Police officer, Lifelong Learning and Employability (LLE) Officer.	Locality Forums.
Pupil Referrals Group (PRG)	Sisters High School	3	Depute Head Teacher (chair), Support for Learning Teacher (alternate chair), Teacher (note taker), Children and Families team (Team Leader or Family Support Worker or Education Welfare Officer), Educational Psychologist, Guidance teacher, LLE Officer.	Otherwise called Stage Two meetings.
Forum (SSF and PRG) Review	Sisters High School	1	Depute Head Teacher (chair), Teacher (note taker), Support for Learning Teacher, Children and Families Team Leader, Guidance Teacher, CAMHS worker, School Nurse, Voluntary Sector staff, Community Police Officer, LLE Officer.	
Leaving School Forum	Sisters High School	1	Depute Head Teacher (chair), Teacher (note taker), Support for Learning Teacher, Children and Families Team Leader, Guidance Teachers, CAMHS worker, School Nurse, Voluntary Sector staff, Community Police Officer, LLE Officer.	Locality Forums.

Forums	Organiser	Number of Observations	Attendees	Notes
Primary School Locality Forum	Robin	4	Team Leader (chair) and a member of the Council's administrative staff (note taker), Primary School Head Teachers, Behaviour Support Teacher, CAMHS worker, School Nurse, School/Community Police officer, LLE Officer.	Locality Forums.
Primary School Locality Forum	Snows	1	Team Leader (chair) and a member of the Council's administrative staff (note taker), Health Visitors, Primary School Head Teachers, Behaviour Support Teacher, CAMHS worker, School Nurse, Community Police officer, LLE Officer.	Locality Forums.
GIRFEC Partnership Board	Ballian Council	1	Director of the Education and Community Directorate (chair), My contact person/Planning Officer (note taker) Heads/managers of services, NHS Child's health commissioner, Ballian's Councillor.	My informants considered it a 'Strategic' group.
Named Person Implementation Group	Ballian Council	1	Additional Support Needs Manager of the Council (chair), NHS service manager (co-chair), My contact person/Planning Officer, Children and Families Locality Manager, Education staff of the Council, Children and Families Team Leaders, Lifelong Learning and Employability Officer.	A subgroup, responsible to GIRFEC Partnership Board. My informants considered it a 'Strategic' group.

Forums	Organiser	Number of Observations	Attendees	Notes
GIRFEC Practice and Training Group	Broons Primary School	1	GIRFEC Development Officer (chair), Children and Families Team Leaders, Deputy Head Teacher of Broons Primary School, Health Visitor Team Manager, School Nurse Team Leader, Physiotherapy Team Leader, CAMHS worker, Occupational Therapist.	Responsible to Named Person Implementation Group. My informants considered it an 'Operational' group.
GIRFEC Training	Ballian Council	1	Education staff of the Council (trainer), GIRFEC Development Officer (co-trainer), speech and language therapist (co-trainer), Primary School Head Teachers, Health Visitors, School nurse, Depute Head Teacher at Secondary School, Voluntary Sector manager, Social Workers.	Aim: focussed on introducing and discussing the roles of a Named Person and the Lead Professional
TOTAL		25		

Meanwhile I had not forgotten the Named Person and, over time, as I had spent more time in the field, the role of the Named Person became more prominent in the discussions in meetings I attended and in interviews. Then one day I observed a meeting in where a new appointed GIRFEC Development Officer was present. GIRFEC again came to the forefront of my mind as I made the connection between Named Person and GIRFEC. I had read and written about this in my research proposal but having a new person on board with the title “GIRFEC” in her job title and at the time when the Council was ‘designing and implementing’ the Named Person was when my inquiry became more focussed. I instinctively wanted to talk to her and to follow the potential leads and see where they led. They led me to other meetings and other documents, then to the exploration of the Named Person service, which led me back to the settings (i.e. a school and Children and Families team) and people I had met before.

3.6.2. ‘Talking to people’

Carrying out informal talks was enjoyable for me. I felt I could ask anything and I found my informants were generally open. Not all the talks were about the meetings we had just come from, nor were they limited to what I wanted to know. My informants talked about their personal opinions of what was discussed in the meetings, and they asked about my research and how things worked in Indonesia. With one informant, we shared an interest in Christianity, and we talked about that as well. While I was in a car with any of my informants I did not take notes, as I would have felt awkward in doing so, but as soon as we were in town and I got on the bus I typed in notes on my phone. For these informal talks I gained retrospective consent; that is I emailed them with the notes that I was going to use for my thesis, and asked

if they would allow me to use them. There were two such cases and for all of them I gained the informants' consent.

The conversations based on documents or on a database system were taking place in office setting, as the informants guided me through the documents or the system (called *Frameworki*). For example, as an informant explained to me how an agenda was drawn together, she took me through the database system and showed me how she would do it, showing me where the information came from, and who would send out and receive the information. With the informant permission and knowledge, occasionally I got to jot down some words in my notebook during the conversations.

Table 4 shows some details of those informal talks.

Table 4. List of Informal Talks

Note: Pseudonyms are used for locations and other identifiable information

Name	Informants' Job Title	Location (areas covered)	Number of Talks	Notes
Neve	Member of Administrative Staff	Ballian	1	
Matilda	GIRFEC Development Officer	Ballian	1	
VSB (group talk)	Voluntary Sector B (supporting families affected by substance misuse)	Ballian	1	Working with families who have problems caused by substance misuse
Amber	Children and Families Team Leader	Snows	2	
Helen		Robin	1	
Morag		Bridges & chair of Screening Group for Offending Children and Young People	1	
Violet	Education Welfare	Snows	1	

	Officer			
Hugh	Family Support Worker	Snows	1	
	TOTAL NUMBER OF TALKS		9	

I had done formal interviews before but never in Scotland, so I was concerned about not able to ask my questions well. I knew the basics of open questions and paraphrasing, but still I had concerns when I had to conduct my first interview. My biggest concern was the fact that I was not Scottish and I feared I would be unable to keep up with the conversation because I might not understand the words used or the context. Retrospectively, I realised being unfamiliar with how things work here (in Scotland) had actually benefitted me because I could ask simple questions that ended up with informative responses. For example, when I asked an informant whether she understood the “Stage Two” that another informant had mentioned in one meeting we attended, this informant said she did not know what it meant. This made me consider the different kinds of information I could get through interviews, which in this case enriched my observations. This example shows the pragmatic and complementary benefit of doing qualitative interviews (Mason, 2002).

I always came to the interview with a printed out information sheet and consent form. Most of times my interviewees had signed the consent form but a couple of times my interviewees said they could not open the attachment containing the information sheet and the consent form – that they had not had the chance to look at it. I gave them the information sheet and consent form that I had brought with me and gave them time to read them and sign the form. I would then sign the form in the section for researcher in front of the interviewee.

In total I have carried out 16 formal interviews (see Table 5). The people I interviewed attended the Locality Forums I observed. They were: staff member of Children and Families, Primary Head Teachers, a Deputy Head Teacher at a secondary school, staff member of a voluntary organisation, a CAMHS worker, a GIRFEC Development Officer, two members of staff representing Lifelong Learning and Employability, and other members of staff in Education in the Council.

However, not all who attended the forums were interviewed. For example, I did not interview the Schools' Nurses, Pupil Support Teacher, Police Officer, Housing and Homeless Team Member from the Council, and other Primary Head Teachers and Secondary School's Guidance Teachers. Of these, some did not reply to my interview requests, while others were not selected or because I had interviewed professionals with similar occupations. Because I was interested in the frontline perspective, I primarily selected people who had direct contact with the children or young people that were discussed in the Forums. The length of the interviews varied. On average they were just below one hour, with the shortest lasting for 29 minutes and the longest 1 hour 20 minutes. Most of the interviews took place in the interviewees' workplace, while two took place in a coffee shop.

The nature of IE interviews is 'dialogic' in that the researcher is trying to establish a collaborative activity where the informant is able to talk about his/her experiences (Smith, 2005; Snyder, 2012). I believe I achieved that with most of my interviews. However, there was one particular interview which I felt was unsuccessful. I felt I had made the interviewee feel she had not given me the information I needed, instead of allowing her to share her experience. To a number of questions I had asked, she answered with "*I don't know*" because the questions were not immediately related to

her work. I realised this when reflecting back on the interview. I had found it difficult to relate my questions to her experience. This highlighted the struggle I had with IE in that I, the researcher, was not ‘in the same world’ (see Smith, 2002). My questions were extended from the observations I had done at a Locality Forum which she attended, in which I was interested about children and their families (that were discussed in the meetings) while the informant’s work had not been organised specifically for those children and families.

I also experienced a loss of audio-recording from one of the interviews. I realised this less than 24 hours after the interview, when I wanted to transfer the recording file to the computer. So I immediately typed up what I remembered from the interview. The recalling process was helped by the list of questions I had sent to the interviewee beforehand. I applied one of the strategies to writing up fieldnotes, which is to focus on specific topics (Emerson et al., 2011). I have the recording file of the other half of the interview and I transcribed it fully as soon as I could. I sent an email to the informant with my apologies and asked if she would mind reading my notes to confirm the accuracy of my transcription. She and I read through my notes the next time we met.

I found using it useful to use a child’s case/situation from my observations as a *vignette* in the interviews. It helped me to make sense of what happened in the observation and gave information on what had happened before and after the meeting. Even when I could not find an example, I could ask the interviewee to give me an example from her own experience. However, at the same time this points out my limitation due to not being in the everyday world as much as I wanted. Even though “institutional ethnography relies on people’s capacity to tell their experience”

(Smith, 2005, p123), I felt I had a limited knowledge to begin asking questions to the professionals because I was only observing certain meetings. I recognised this as a problem that institutional ethnographers' face (e.g. Smith, 1990, 2002, 2005).

Bearing in mind "experience" is to be understood as a dialogue, I recognised that the ethnographer's experience depends on the informants' experience too. What is this "experience"? It is what is remembered either in speech or writing, and is "never a pure representation of some original" (Smith, 2005). Dialogue is co-production of data and thus data is a collaborative product: between the informants and the ethnographer.

Table 5. List of Formal Interviews

Note: Pseudonyms are used for locations and other identifiable information

Name	Informants' Job Title	Area/locality covered	Number of Interviewee	Notes
Yvonne	Health Visitor Team Manager	Ballian	1	
James	Voluntary Sector A (promoting health and wellbeing of young people)	Ballian	1	
Beatrice	Youth Justice Officer	Willows and Ballian	1	
Amber	Team Leader Children's Services	Snows	1	
Helen		Robin	1	
Jenny	Duty Team Leader	Ballian	1	Social Worker
Eleanor	Deputy Head Teacher for Pastoral Support	Sisters High School	1	
Dawn	Guidance Teacher	Sisters High School	1	
Maureen Wanda	Head Teacher – Primary Schools	Robin	2	
Olga	Principal Teacher – Behaviour Support	Robin	1	
Hana Martha	Lifelong Learning and Employability	Ballian	2	

Matilda	GIRFEC Development Officer	Ballian	1	
Janette	Community Mental Health Worker - CAMHS	Ballian	1	
Fonda	Educational Psychologist	Ballian	1	
	TOTAL NUMBER OF INTERVIEWEES		16	

To locate the professionals I talked to (formally and informally) within the observation settings, such as Locality Forums and Screening Group meetings, the following visuals are offered to clarify how they are connected to one another. Figure 4 on the next page shows Amber (Children and Families Team Leader) and her team members (Violet and Hugh) taking turns in attending the Pupil Referral Group (PRG) and Secondary School Locality Forum meetings at Sisters High School. Some professionals attend both meetings, such as Dawn (Guidance Teacher) and Hana (Lifelong Learning and Employability staff) and others, such as Community Police Officer and those from the voluntary sector do not. The two pictures show how the PRG is predominantly attended by school staff and staff from the Children and Families team, along with Fonda (Educational Psychologist) as an additional member, while on the other hand the Locality Forum is multi-agency.

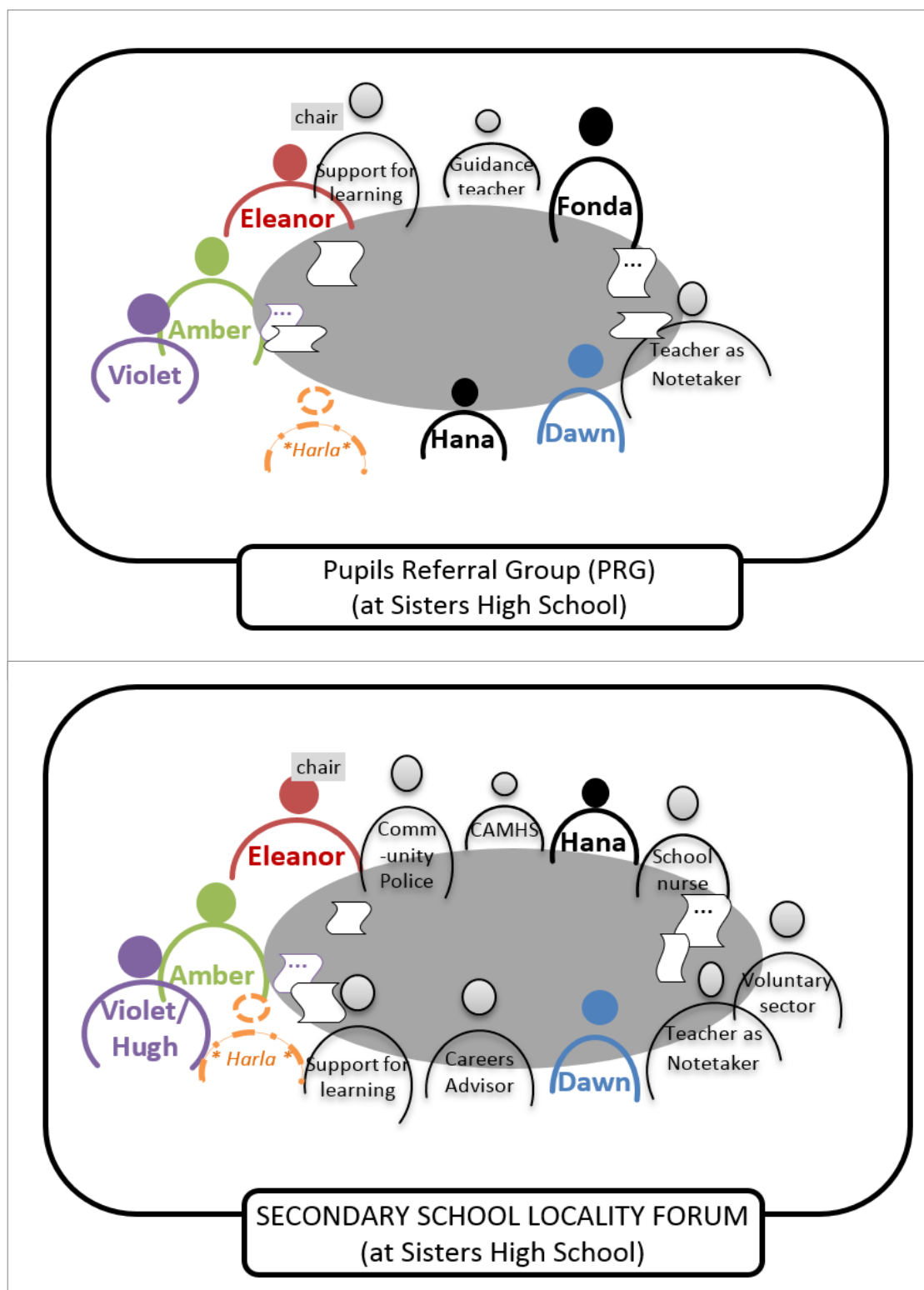


Figure 4. Pupils Referral Group and Secondary School Locality Forum meetings at Sisters High School

Meanwhile, Figure 5 below shows the difference between the Secondary and the Primary School Locality Forums. The Primary School Locality Forum meetings that I observed were Locality based and not school based: the Head Teachers from different Primary Schools within the Robin Locality came together to the Forum meeting.

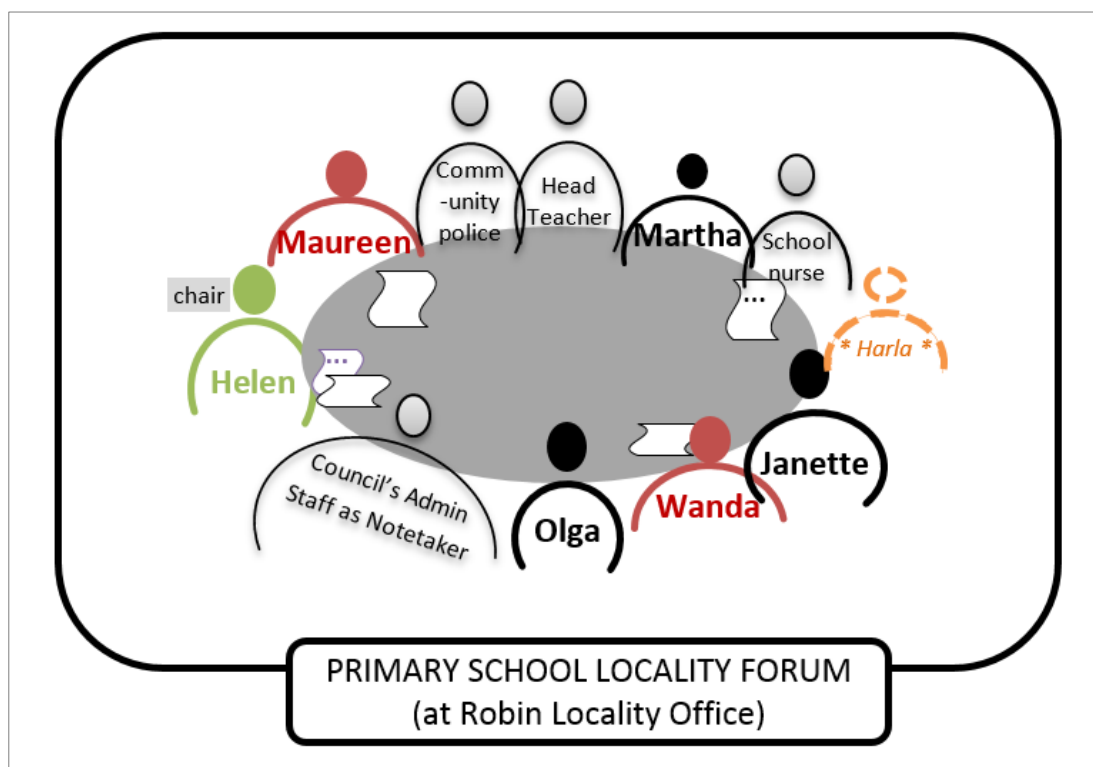


Figure 5. The Primary School Locality Forum at Robin Locality

I also interviewed some members of the two screening groups: the Screening Group for Non-Offending Children and Young People, and the Screening Group for Offending Children and Young People. These Screening Groups were part of Ballian's GIRFEC implementation structure, with a particular focus on early intervention. Figure 6 below locates the professionals in each of the Screening Group meetings. I considered myself lucky when Matilda, the GIRFEC Development Officer, came along to one of the meetings of the Screening Group for Non-

Offending Children and Young People. She was not a regular at these meeting. She came because at that time she was new to the job and was introduced to the group.

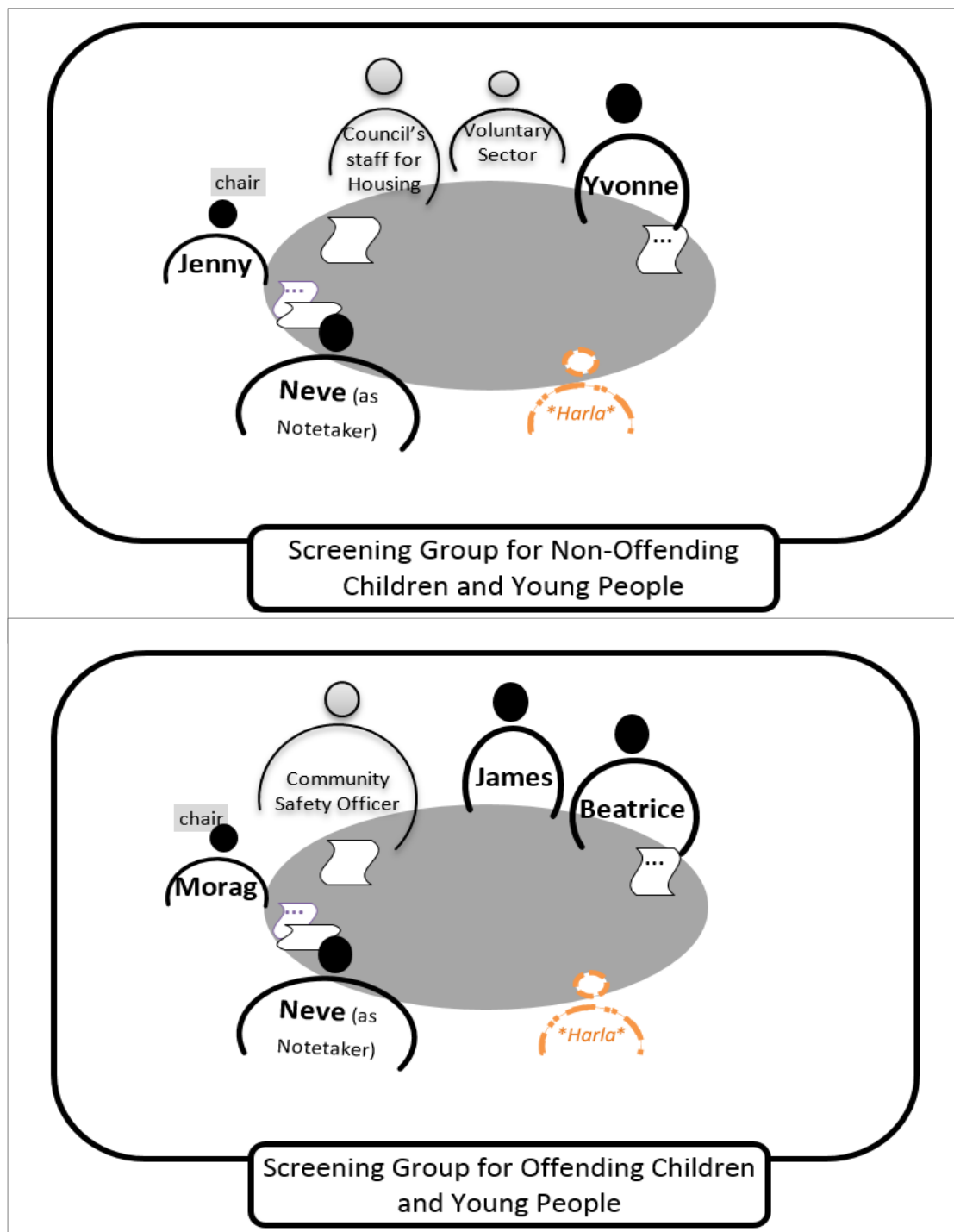


Figure 6. The Screening Group for Non-Offending Children and Young People and the Screening Group for Offending Children and Young People

3.6.3. Analysing documents

I looked at all the documents that were handed to me, used in meetings, and mentioned in meetings. Thus they were already in some sort of context. I used these documents in order to understand what I had observed and had been told in the interviews. In IE, these organisational documents are significant in suggesting how people's actions are connected to one another through coordinated processes, such as referral (see Smith, 2002). For example, I used a wellbeing concerns form (Appendix 10a) to start a conversation with an informant, and following that I was able to start making links on how the introduction of the form gave power to the role of the Named Person. The links helped me to make sense of the concerns about the role – which were raised by other informants during my observations (although the form was not mentioned in those observations).

The type of documents that I analysed varied. They include: referral form to Locality Forum (blank) (Appendix 8), Wellbeing Concerns Forms (Appendix 10), Guidelines from the Council, Strategic Plans from the Council, and minutes of meetings.

Particularly, the referral form was used to trace how information about a child and meetings' discussions about the child got into the database system. The referral form and wellbeing forms (with texts) activated mechanisms of working together. I looked at how such form is used and also how the informants' work is organised around them.

I acquired the documents in various ways. First, I asked for blank forms of the one used at meetings. Second, I requested strategic documents such as Children's Services Planning from the Children and Families team leaders or from Charles, my contact person. Third, some documents were given to me during some of the

strategic meetings that I attended in the Council. Fourth, I browsed through the Council's website. Here is an example of how I worked with a document. A document giving information of the Locality Forums was given to me at my first observation. After that meeting I read it as background knowledge of that meeting, but later on I came back to the document because it was mentioned in an interview by Amber, the Children and Families Team Leader. She suggested I read the "Management" section in the document after I inquired about her role in the Locality Forum. Having read it again, my attention was drawn to the "Management" and "Administration" sections because I could locate my research informants in these sections.

3.6.4. Making visual representations of the data

In summary, the process of data generating went hand in hand with the process of mapping the two settings: a school and the Children and Families team at the Council; and mapping the Locality Forums (as exemplified in Section 3.6.2). The technique of visually 'mapping' a professional in relation to, for example, documents and power hierarchy, has been found in studies that applied Institutional Ethnography (e.g. McKenzie, 2006; Townsend et al., 2003). IE's commitment to stay focussed on how things unfolded on the ground has been found challenging in practice (Bisaillon and Rankin, 2012). One of the reasons is due to the participants' knowledge dissociation: they might make a connection between what happens and their own emotions or social and political stance which would adversely affect my research. In my case, the unsettling development of the Named Person policy and dealing with different agencies during my fieldwork provided challenges in itself. Mapping helped me to select my research participants, but it did not help me make

connections between them. I turned to add plastic transparencies on top of my visual maps. I kept the *layer* transparent because I needed to be able to connect people, database system, forms, and documents (in Chapter 4 and 5).

Further into my fieldwork, there was training for practitioners about the Named Person's role. This process represents *progressive focussing* (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995), and my analysis moved on to locate the Head Teachers (Primary School) and Guidance Teachers (Secondary School) in the myriad of inter-agency working relations that I had mapped. Again, using mapping and layering, I showed how a teacher's work (in working together with other professionals) would be changed when one is to be a Named Person (in Chapter 6).

The following figure (Figure 7) shows an earlier product of my ‘mapping plus layering’.

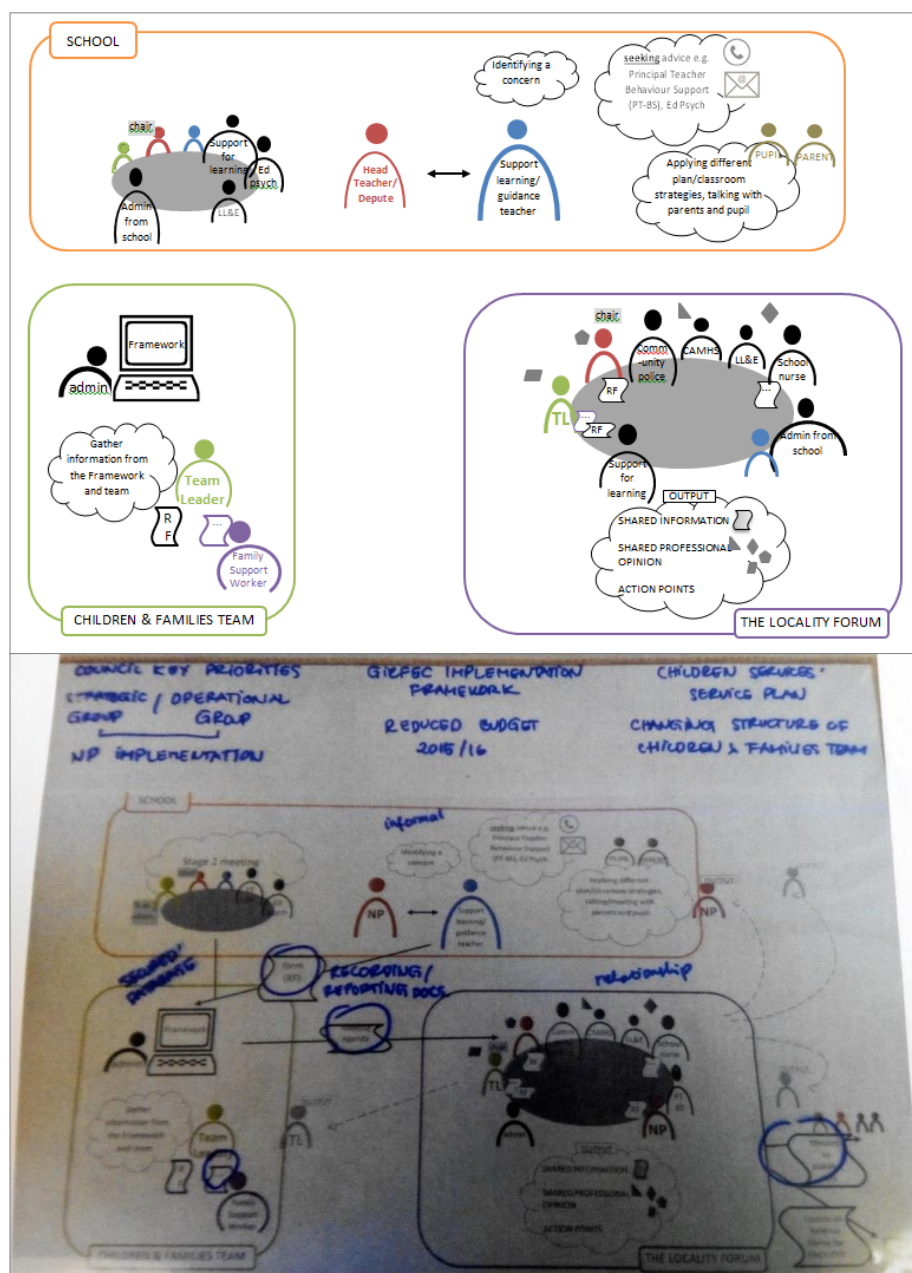


Figure 7. Earlier product of incorporating *mapping* and *layering* technique

3.7. Data analysis

Researching the social world is a messy undertaking (Law, 2004). The changing social world requires adaptive social research methods. While recognising the

development of different disciplines' focus (for example, anthropologists have explored writing and receiving culture), Law argues that methods that researchers used to research this changing phenomenon are not yet adaptive (Law, 2004, p3). Furthermore, such talks of methods often followed with *symmetrical* analysis methods. For example, interview transcripts would be followed with coded notes. This is not to say 'interview and then coding' is a wrong undertaking, but instead of following the rule of usual analysis there might be other ways that would produce realities closer to the realities of the people studied. In an unpredictable world of social research context, such as my research, I recognised the need to be able to explain my data in a manner that is close to what I observed. I turned to *interpretivist* approach.

I turned to an interpretivist approach to help me understand my data because it emphasises the dialogue between the researcher and the researched (Cohen and Crabtree, 2006). This approach posits that reality cannot be separated from our knowledge of it, and that reality is socially constructed (Rowlands, 2005) and fluid (Cohen and Crabtree, 2006). The IE interpretivist stance is that the everyday world provides clues to understanding how the power structure that governs people's lives works (McGibbon et al., 2010).

An ethnographic research undertaking is interpreting interactions (or dialogue to similarise IE language) between the ethnographer and data (Denzin, 2001; Emerson et al., 2011). The methods chosen in generating data, what to observe or ask or look at have implications for the kinds of data used, and further how to interpret the data so as to be meaningful for ethnographer and the audience. Linking methods with analysis has been the challenge for the ethnographer that contributes to issues of

interpretation in ethnography (Dingwall, 1980). Historically, ethnographers and other qualitative researchers have refined their skills for understanding the social world in the midst of the following tensions around: theories, epistemology, methodology, and authority of the researcher. There are also tensions around questions of validity, reliability and objectivity. Within the last decade the focus has been on methodology as new ways of inquiry, interpreting, arguing and writing about the social world (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). As a consequence, “qualitative researchers deploy a wide range of interconnected interpretive methods, always seeking better ways to make more understandable the worlds of experience they have studied” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p21). The current development of qualitative research thrusts researchers into creative possibilities in doing research reflexively (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005); meaning that as the body of literature about methods, paradigms, theoretical lenses is growing, we should also re-examine or challenge traditional or contemporary paradigms, strategies and methods. However, this is also a reminder that qualitative research will always be caught in tensions that have defined and will redefine it.

Finding the *standpoint position* was problematic in my research, as I mentioned in Section 2.3.2. However, I realised that because IE looks at experience as the entry point for an inquiry to reveal *ruling relations*, I could find traces of order or *ruling* by observing the meetings with an aim to understand inter-agency working processes. This is where ethnomethodology sits well in IE’s approach. Ethnomethodology posits that there is order in the taken for granted social activities. It attempts to shed light on the order by explicating how the activities happen (Blaikie, 2010).

In general, “methods of qualitative analysis differ in the extent to which they attempt to ‘retain the integrity of the phenomenon’” (Blaikie, 2010, p212). This refers to how the researcher would approach the data, use theories or concepts in explaining the data, or generate concepts or theories from the data. IE is interested in neither, and my research is not interested in generating theory from data. Rather, “analysis in institutional ethnography is done in your writing and as you write” (Campbell and Gregor, 2002, p93). IE does not prescribe technical ways to make sense of data, but reminds the ethnographer to come back to the problematic as guidance. Data analysis in IE has received less attention than its ways to produce data (Walby, 2013), and so the *listening guide* (originally developed by social psychologists) is proposed as the alternative to analysis because it shares a similar approach to IE: that is its approach to the social world begins with narratives about everyday lives. I did not perceive this method as fitting to analyse my data because the nature of activities of inter-agency working that my informants had described were vexed within multiple and interconnected experiences of other informants. Therefore, a close multiple reading to one person’s accounts would be difficult. Instead, I used this guiding question to approach my data: “*What does it tell me about how this setting or event happens as it does?*” (Campbell and Gregor, 2002, p85).

What is clear is that IE is not interested in thematic analysis (Rankin and Campbell, 2009). IE does not use data to fit into existing categories; its analytic virtue is through constant looking back and forth between the data and the overall results. It is against the idea of using excerpts to justify arriving at a conclusion. However, IE does aim to discover concepts of social and ruling relations. I concluded that themes would still emerge but not in a predetermined way. Drawing from other literature,

“thematic analysis is widely used, but there is no clear agreement about what thematic analysis is and how you go about doing it” (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p6). It is flexible because it is independent from theory and epistemology. This fits IE’s rejection of the dominance of theory and epistemology that I have mentioned.

I used MS Word ‘search’ and ‘find’ tab to help me in ‘reading’ my transcription of interviews, fieldnotes and documents. I started my analysis manually and I would say that my analysis began in the field when I started mapping processes that link my informants’ activities together. I started to build a picture: making sense of what I heard and saw (see Section 3.6.4 above), then developed the picture when I talked to my informants about the cases in the meetings. Townsend and colleagues (2003) write, “whereas a conventional ethnography develops themes and theories about what is subjectively known and experienced, an institutional ethnography seeks to describe how social relations are organised beyond a local setting” (p20). This does not mean that IE rejects concepts or theories nor that it settles for descriptive accounts (Smith, 1997b); rather, it proposes that the analysis of IE requires the researcher to provide “convincing evidence to *account* for the experiences that have been described by informants” (Rankin and Campbell, 2009, p6). In the three chapters that follow I will show how I have found that structures and power are *in* social relations. They are not separated.

I identified, tracked, and described (see Campbell and Gregor, 2002). I went to other meetings, I read documents, I made connections (mapping). “Speaking in theoretical terms about their analytic work, institutional ethnographers would say they explicate the ruling relations that organise and coordinate the local experiences of informants” (Campbell and Gregor, 2002, p89). Not using ‘triangulation’ as in other types of

ethnographic research, but the essence of testing data accuracy in IE takes stock of materialism and empiricism, instead of abstraction (Campbell and Gregor, 2002). This means IE does not suggest that data from interviews need to be contrasted or complemented with data from observations. Instead, data from the two sources needs to be treated as interrelated in order to discover how *ruling relations* work. A different perspective is of Richardson and St. Pierre (2005) who consider the process of crystalising an account (abstraction), rather than triangulating, is also a process of taking into account of what comes out from applying other methods in the same research.

What IE can offer through analysis, in comparison to other analytical methods, is to remain as close as possible to the known realities and to recognise the ethnographer's limitation to grasp everything. I was not in every Children and Families team or the schools' meetings. I was not shadowing the Head Teacher or other informants. There are other activities I could not record. I also acknowledge that the knowledge I gained and produced has to do with the choices I made during fieldwork. Throughout this chapter I have tried to explain why I had chosen my methods, and how each was actually being applied in the field. Part of being reflexive in doing research is recognising the methods the researcher used shaped the realities he/she observed and recorded, hence called 'data' (Law, 2004). This reflexivity echoes what Jenkins (1994) called 'maturity' as an ethnographer, and this is one rationale for producing knowledge and what makes an ethnographer's monograph sufficient to produce knowledge.

In analysing the findings I considered the context of how they were collected. The context is inseparable in the analysis (Dey, 1993; Mason, 2002). Mason (2002)

suggests this context consists of temporal dimensions, spatial or geographical dimensions, and organisational dimensions. I have mentioned earlier that my data was generated following the approach I used in the field, and that time was an important factor. The longer I stayed in the field the more I heard and read about the debate of the Named Person. Therefore, the way my analysis expands follows the manner of how I generated my data. There is data about mapping of what the informants did and what they knew. The data is then explicated by how what they did and knew was organised. I aimed to provide a critical description of how experiences were organised. At the same time, the Named Person policy development in Ballian created problems for the informants' experiences because it changed their activities.

I have mentioned earlier, that IE's account of experience as data relies on the dialogic process between the ethnographer and the informants. In analysis, what I am dealing with is a written account of that dialogue process. Clifford (1983) reminds that "ethnography is from beginning to end enmeshed in writing" (p120). He adds that the writing process includes at the minimum, "a translation of experience into textual form" (p120).

IE does not wish to reproduce lived experiences but use the experiences as a gate towards apparatuses of ruling (Denzin, 1997). In making sense of experience in the analysis process, IE is not interested in 'reporting back' people's experience (Silverman, 2013). Instead it is looking for cues that can lead to further investigation or exploration of what makes the experience such as it is. However, because conversations are dialogues in which the experience reported are guided by the questions of ethnographer, the ethnographers need to be aware of their position when

they translate the partial, subjective, contextual world of people (Clifford, 1983). In other words, to be reflexive.

Ethnography struggles to make sense of lived experience, and so different standpoints are adopted by ethnographers (Denzin, 1997). IE is not an exception. For example, there is a claim that experience is not ideology-free and therefore experience is constructed (Clough, 1994). While IE is posed as a critique towards the claim, it seeks to make visible to the knower how their experience is organised. Here I would like to extend my 'experience as the ethnographer' as I was influenced by IE's notion of 'dialogue' when reading my ethnographic texts. The ethnographer's experience I am discussing here suggests influence over my research process when I interacted with my informants (fieldwork) and when I read data (analysis). As Jenkins (1994) observes, "fieldwork is an apprenticeship of signs, a process of entry into a particular world, governed by a variety of factors, including the situation and previous experience of the anthropologist" (Jenkins, 1994, p445). Although the knowledge I 'produced' is in partial, distorted form because of the ethnographer's subjectivity (questions, situation, experience), it is sufficient (see Jenkins, 1994) because I acknowledged my role in producing the knowledge. I am not claiming my ethnographic account to be a product of reality but rather an interpretation of reality that is achieved through a reproduction of perceived activities from a particular viewpoint. So there are two experiences interacting in ethnography; that of the ethnographer and that of the informants.

On reflection, I did not start by relating to the experience of people attending the meetings. I found myself relating to the child they discussed. I did not intend that this should happen nor realised it had until recently, when I re-read my fieldnotes. As I

have mentioned before I was coming into the field not able to ‘locate’ the Named Person but assuming would be. Now reading my notes and reflected on why I took certain ways to start mapping working together (i.e. following on information that is shared), and on why I was interested in the situation of children and young people discussed when teasing out what the professionals did when they worked together, it hit me that I was the child they were discussing. By this I mean I recognised myself in the situations of these children and young people because of what I had been through in my childhood.

This realisation helped me to understand my data better. It may seem that I, had assumed the meetings were supporting the child or that certain inter-agency working mechanisms were working to make children at the centre, as GIRFEC promises. However, the point I am making here is that the unexpected process has enabled me to answer my research questions, to explicate inter-agency working and following that to lead me to examine critically the Named Person’s role within the *ruling relations* that shape the ways in which professionals work together. And this is not done by taking the *standpoint* of the Named Person as I had planned. Therefore, my research has been an experience of applying IE as a flexible framework that has been useful to my inquiry in the context of my research.

3.8. Conclusion

This chapter has elaborated the methodological approach of my ethnographic research project. I have explained the methods I employed in researching the inter-agency working processes of children’s services in one Scottish Local Authority. The use of Institutional Ethnography in the research and the ethical complexities of

conducting a research where the informants work is interconnected have been discussed. The chapter has also considered my reflexivity as the researcher and the following three chapters discusses the research findings.

Chapter 4 – People and Information: Making Inter-Agency Working Work

4.1. Introduction

This chapter analyses what inter-agency working looked like in practice, discussing what professionals did, and how their work was organised. Section 4.2 explores the ways in which information about children and young people, as discussed in locality forum meetings, was attained, stored and shared. In so doing, I identify *key people* who enabled this information process. As the research was conducted in the context of GIRFEC implementation, this chapter links discussion with GIRFEC policy documents, specifically the concepts of information sharing and wellbeing. This will take into consideration the UK Supreme Court decision (*The Christian Institute and others v The Lord Advocate* [2016] UKSC 51) against the information sharing provision of the Named Person scheme.

Section 4.3 analyses how the *key people*'s (e.g. Head/Guidance Teacher, Children and Families Team Leaders and Administrative Staff) work was connected through information sharing processes, revealing barriers and facilitating factors for working together. The chapter addresses some of the challenges for inter-agency working at the professional level: inter-professional differences in practices and paradigms (Anning et al., 2010; Hudson, 2007) and relationships between professionals (Davis and Smith, 2012). It also sheds light on how different work procedures inside organisations affect the way professionals work together.

Section 4.4 discusses how the key people's work is immediately linked to other staff working within the Council, and also to professionals in other organisations. It also

shows how technology comes into play in decision making relations that complicate professionals' work. The complexities have implications for the Named Person in showing Named Person roles were not a one person role and that Named Persons do not work in isolation.

Ballian defined internal partnership as co-directorate (2015-2016) or co-divisional working (2014-2015). Meanwhile, external partnership, i.e. working with other organisations such as the police, schools, health boards and voluntary organisations, was referred to as inter-agency. This chapter mainly addresses the external partnerships of Ballian's Children and Families team; however, it also inevitably incorporates perspectives from the Education directorate in the Council as schools were included. My observations included two of the directorate staff: the GIRFEC trainer and the GIRFEC Development Officer.

Figure 8 provides an illustration of the locations mentioned in this chapter, which are Chapel and Star Primary Schools, located in Robin locality, and Sisters High School, located in Snows locality. Each locality had a Children and Families team. I did not include the other two localities (Bridges and Fields) during my fieldwork. The Locality Forums discussed in this chapter include a Secondary School Locality Forum (Sisters High School) and a Primary School Locality Forum both in Robin locality (includes Chapel and Star Primary Schools). My analysis for this chapter was drawn from exploring relations between two *settings*: the schools and the Children and Families team. As discussed in Chapter 3, my entry point was attendance at Locality Forum meetings. I mapped those people most involved in discussions and used the referral forms during the meetings, due to my focus on the discussions about pupils' cases. For the purposes of my analysis, a *setting* is where key people are

located professionally (i.e. where their professional remit sits). As such, each key individual was located differently in my mapping, according to their professional remit. A detailed figure describing where the *key people* are located within the geography of Ballian Council can be found in Appendix 11.

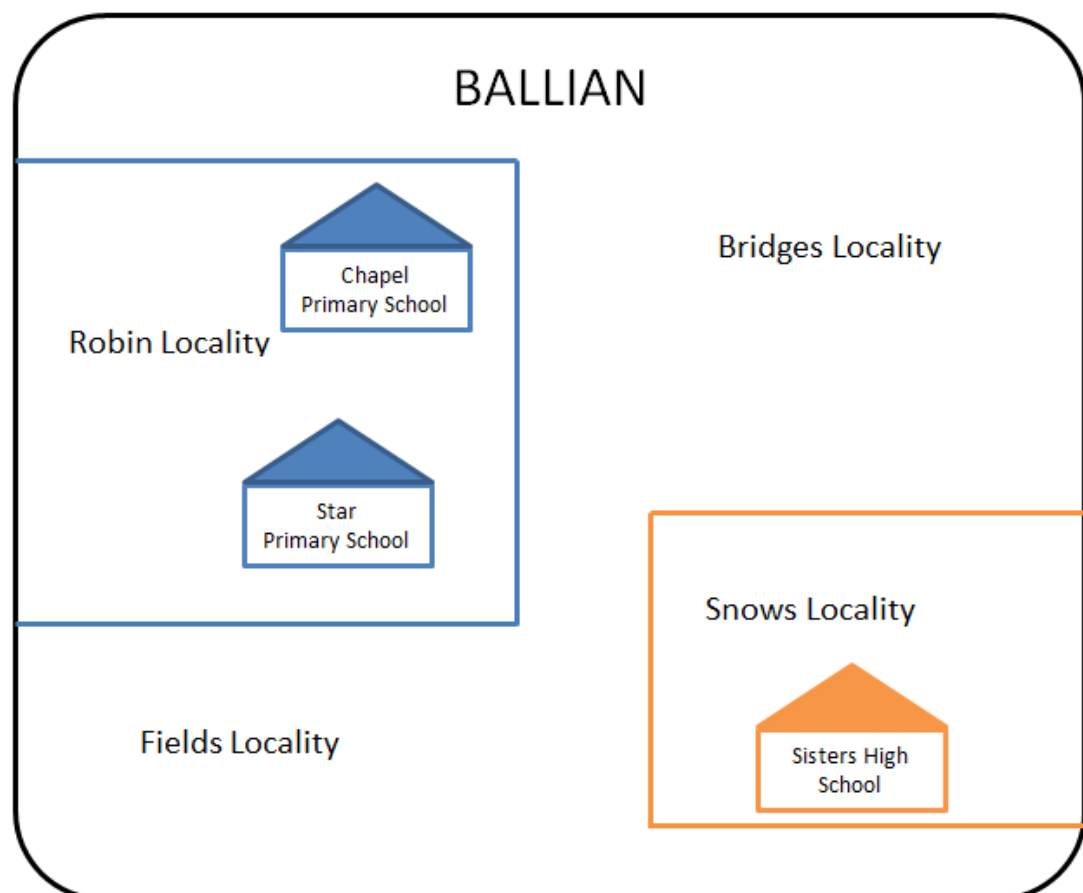


Figure 8. The geography of Ballian Council and location of schools

4.2. Defining and producing information

Information is not easy to define (Martin, 1995; Thompson, 2016), and is often discussed under the terms ‘information sharing’ (Thompson, 2016; Walker, 2008) and ‘communication’ (Martin, 1995). This section does not arrive at a single definition of *information*; instead, it seeks to discuss what counts as information in children’s services.

This section discusses professionals and their roles in inter-agency work as entwined with information. In the process of producing and sharing an account of a child or family, different professionals were involved at each setting (i.e. a school and the Children and Families team at the Council).

Neither children nor their family members were physically present during the processes that linked the two settings. This does not mean that they were not consulted, consenting or made aware of the processes, though my research did not question such participation as this was not directly related to my research questions. Instead, children and families' accounts were represented by texts and oral speeches in the meetings; such texts and speeches can be recorded and passed along between the settings. They may be read and interpreted differently in each setting depending on the professionals' paradigms.

4.2.1. Information: the what, who and how

Texts and oral speeches are conduits for *information* (Thompson, 2016). They are professionals' accounts of children and families' situations and the services they receive, based on what is retrieved from computer databases, notes written during or before meetings and typed forms or reports (e.g. referral forms, Police Reports). For example, a primary school head teacher came to one Primary School Locality Forum with information regarding a pupil's behaviour and what the school had done to support the pupil. The information was then discussed informally with other professionals via telephone and emails without naming the children, or formally in meetings (with consent from the child and family). Once gathered, information was stored or transferred into the database system. The professionals, who had information about children and families discussed in Locality Forums meetings, were

expected to attend the meetings. In fact, the need to discuss certain information regarding a child's behaviour was the reason a Locality Forum was held in the first place. Discussing the information in the Locality Forum meeting is creating a discourse in which the *discourse* is a frame that regulates what people say and write (see Smith 2005). Therefore, the use of discourse, the formulation of what counts as information, and how it is related across the system (Smith, 2005) starts to show *how* power operates, which is of interest to Foucault (see Hardy, 1996). And the filling out of referral forms embeds the information about children and families in the discourse (see Gilbert and Powell, 2010).

I traced information about cases discussed in Locality Forum meetings. As discussed in Chapter 3, because the Named Person was not identifiable at the beginning of my fieldwork, I started off focussing on cases. As teachers referred cases to the meetings, I began to examine the ways in which they acquired information about their pupils.

Teachers presented information about a pupil, for discussion in Locality Forum meetings. This information had been acquired from: from pupils and their family members, the schools' database record, family support workers working with the family in question and other professionals (e.g. educational psychologists, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service [CAMHS] workers and voluntary service workers). The different sources of information resulted in different kinds of information.

Teachers acquire information about pupils during day-to-day observation and interaction at school. The following excerpt, from the Deputy Head Teacher of

Sisters High School, is an example of disciplinary procedures that took place at a secondary school, and provides a background to the kind of case discussed in the Locality Forum meetings that I observed, and which are the basis of this thesis:

Eleanor: ...If there's a concern around behaviour in class, in school, we have a five-stage discipline policy called the Positive Discipline Policy, where again it's stages of intervention, and we try to use the language of choice. There's five stages... The point is to try to stop it here before it goes to there [detention]. ... If they still misbehave in class or they do something that's just suddenly quite disruptive then **stage three would be they'd get sent out of class but just for a few minutes**, [emphasis added] ... they [the pupils] would be sent to other teacher for a minute or two. So they'd get sent to a teacher, they'd get a slip as well, and the teacher would say 'why are you here', 'well I was misbehaving, I was talking, I was disruptive and the teacher says...' and the teacher would say to them 'well you've got two choices here, you can either go back in the class and behave and go on with your learning or you can go back and choose to misbehave and it escalates and ends up in detention. What's it going to be?' Nine times out of ten they would say 'I'd go back and I get on with my learning' D'you know?! For most kids it stops there.... The reason I'm telling you all that is we deal with that in school. Because we're trying to say you can choose to behave so that you don't get detention. We would deal with that in the first place in school through our positive discipline... If there is a sanction and detention, parents are contacted.

(Eleanor, Sisters High School Deputy Head Teacher, Interview)

Eleanor describes the progression of intervention as it reflects pupils' behaviour and their choices. Information about behavioural concerns that teachers bring to the Locality Forum meetings has had prior 'intervention' within the school remit. Therefore, information about cases in the meetings is context-dependant (see Lawler and Bilson, 2010); it becomes information worthy of the Locality Forum when the

teachers decide that the schools' intervention has not generated changes in a pupil's behaviour. This means that teachers who make referrals to Locality Forum meetings are presenting meaningful information for the Forum (Thompson, 2016, p55); the information carries not only the teachers' concerns about the pupil, but also what the school has done to address the concerns.

Teachers' work with information is part of following the schools' procedures and, most obviously, it is part of their day-to-day job as they observe and interact with the pupils. Although teachers like Eleanor might not have daily interaction with the pupils she refers to Locality Forum meetings, she has information of those pupils because they are 'known' through the schools' procedures, such as the Positive Discipline procedure. I chose to emphasise Eleanor's mention of stage three of the five-stage Positive Discipline procedure, because starting at that stage the classroom teacher makes a note on the pupils' record in the school's electronic system (*OnTheButton*). The record is the teacher's formal account of the pupil's behaviour and what interventions have been made (see Thompson, 2016). This also reflects teacher's power over information creation and recording. The teacher decides what children's behaviour and school's interventions should be known and recorded.

There is another way a head teacher can get information about their pupils. Maureen, the Star Primary School Head Teacher, explains how sometimes problems can be identified before a child starts the school year:

Maureen: I was in Vienn (other Local Authority) previously and I always instigated a meeting before every nursery intake. So before Christmas holiday I have a meeting with health visitors and find out about the January children start. The same goes in Easter and in August. I suppose the most important is

the August meeting cause that's when the big intake...(Harla: Intake of the nursery?) yes, for the nursery, and that's really a good time to meet up with the health visitors, and they can say if there's any difficulties of any of the children or families or anything we need to know.

Harla: Okay, and then from that information you update your own records, or...?

Maureen: Yep. So I would update any personal information I have on the children in their files. We call it PPRs (Pupils Progress Records), so we just add any relevant information. Although, if it's confidential information that's going to stay separate. If it's child protection nature then that would stay separate. But usually information comes to us when the children start.

(Maureen, Star Primary School Head Teacher, Interview)

Information that Maureen collects from other professionals has already been constructed in another setting and time. Information is, therefore, a professional's account of what happened at a particular time and as it travels to a different professional, it will be treated according to that professional's needs (see Thompson, 2016). As the primary school that Maureen leads also has a nursery, her initiative to meet with health visitors before the nursery intake is a strategy of information gathering at an early stage. As she explained, the kind of information she looks for is related to difficulties the children and their families face. This process reflects a prevention strategy through early intervention where a universal service (i.e. the nursery and school) is involved in assessing difficulties children and families may be going through (Munro, 2010). Furthermore, her strategy reflects a formal mechanism of inter-agency working, as there are meetings with other professionals (i.e. health visitors) to obtain information about children and families. An example of the kind of information received was a health visitor's account of a child and family, i.e. an

indirect source of information. Although my research is not about the involvement of children and families in the processes of inter-agency working, Maureen's strategy notes include little (if any) children and families' involvement in the process of acquiring information about them. This handing on of information is another example of power of making children and families 'known'. And the bureaucracy is not noting children and families' involvement – it may be there but not necessary for the professionals to note in the information record.

Maureen mentions PPR (Pupils Progress Records) as the medium she uses to record information about children and families that she receives from the health visitors. She explains that child protection-related and confidential information are stored separately, suggesting that she has a mechanism in place to deal with different kinds of information. Extending this to my earlier discussion about the nature of information, Maureen's example shows that the information she (the school) receives from other professionals about future pupils is not only about education but could include information about welfare and so on. This echoes Thompson's (2013) argument that information about children's lives is indeed complex. The school's information storing procedures are based on assessments of the nature of the information received.

Once a child starts school, more information is added to the PPR. Therefore, the record contains more and more accounts about the child and family (e.g. from school staff and other professionals), including attendance records and perhaps notes about teachers' communication with the children and their family. Such practice of record keeping is an objectification of pupils that reflects Weber's *rationalisation* (see Clegg, 1994): the process of creating information is part of a depersonalisation of

children and their family. This is the nature of information that teachers like Maureen and Eleanor would bring into meetings or share with other professionals as they become part of inter-agency working relationships. Later on in the meetings the information changes: as the result of discussion and addition from other professionals; and so the rationalisation continues. This then reflects how power over information is relationally expressed and practiced (see Clegg, 1994; Sadan, 2004).

The first reason a case is discussed in the Locality Forum meetings is because teachers suspect problems with other pupils or in the child's family. The following interview excerpt is from a Primary School head teacher. Wanda, Chapel Primary School Head Teacher, discusses her way of assessing a problem with a pupil:

Harla: How do you know, or suspect, that there's a problem in the family?

Wanda: It can be because we know from the child, we know from the parent. We try very much to build bridges with families so that there's an open discussion, there's good communication, and there's a good sharing.... because that's what partnership working requires, it's built on trust. But sometimes it might be that you suspected that there's issues at home, could be because of the child, how they've been presenting at school, in terms of social emotionally, or (child's) late, their attendance, all those sorts of things begin to build a bit of a picture whether there's difficulties at home.

(Wanda, Chapel Primary School Head Teacher, Interview)

Wanda explains different ways of getting information. Often, information comes directly from children and families, or from her own and other colleagues' (as the "we" suggests) observations and the school's records. Therefore, 'building a picture' of a child is done by acquiring information from direct and indirect sources.

However, this 'picture' is a partial account of a child's life (see Thompson, 2016).

Children's lives are messy and complex, and so an effort to achieve a 'full' picture, which is often suggested in child's policy, is problematic (Thompson, 2013).

Professionals are often confronted with uncertain circumstances and thus rely on their judgement based on observations, as Wanda did when she explained her observations of the pupil's behaviour.

While literature on social work has discussed the importance of professional judgement in information sharing (e.g. Garrett, 2005; Munro, 2011), GIRFEC policy documents do not discuss the importance of professional judgement (see for example Scottish Government, 2008, 2012). Instead, GIRFEC suggests a change in practice in information sharing to cope with changes in the electronic information systems that enable inter-professional information sharing (Scottish Government, 2008). This 'electronic turn' (Garrett, 2005; Thompson, 2016) has been considered problematic in the social work domain because it shifts social workers' work towards computer-focussed rather than frontline-focussed (i.e. delivering service to service users), and yet GIRFEC seems to be moving in this direction, as discussed in the next section. From *power* perspective, the computer-focussed system increases depersonalisation of children and families into a record to become part of bureaucratic processes.

So far, information about a pupil could materialise from different sources within the school remit. But there is another role that makes some teachers key to the information process: the role of taking action after information is shared and discussed in meetings. The following excerpt, from a Locality Forum meeting, is a clear example of how a teacher is taking such responsibility:

The next pupil is a girl who self-harmed. Eleanor says she had a meeting with the parents and from that Eleanor made a referral to a family support worker

and booked an appointment with CAMHS. Lynus (from CAMHS) comments “oh great” while taking notes. Eleanor offers herself as the contact person for all support the girl is getting, and to be the contact person for her colleagues about the girl. When Lynus explains that he has a colleague who is an expert on self-harm, Eleanor also says that she herself will contact Lynus’ colleague at CAMHS.

(Secondary School Locality Forum, Fieldnotes)

Eleanor took the initiative to follow up the action points for a pupil as discussed in the locality forum meeting. She was performing the role of a Named Person with reference to the provisional definition in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. However, she was doing so voluntarily. She had been in touch with the girl and her parents, and made contact with CAMHS. All of this happened before the meeting took place. Eleanor was doing a big part of ‘family support’ in partnership working: working with children, families and other professionals (Dolan et al., 2006, p16).

Vincent and colleagues (2010), in their survey on the Child Protection Reform Programme, found that teachers who engaged in partnership working under the programme had “incorporated aspects of broader welfare within their descriptions of what they did” (p447). Indeed, as Eleanor was offering herself to be the point of contact, she began to relate her daily work of observing her pupils to social work issues. To put it another way, Vincent and her colleagues’ findings suggest that being in an inter-agency working environment allows teachers to reflect on how their own practice is related to social work practice.

Teachers also acquired information from the Children and Families team at the Council. The Children and Families team is built around family support ideals, and

its ‘voluntary’ service nature, in the sense that use of the service is optional, sets it apart from social workers. The team is largely made up of Family Support Workers . The following excerpt is about the ways in which the Children and Families team work with teachers. It is part of a conversation I had with Violet, an Education Welfare Officer (of the Children and Families team) based in Snows locality. She worked closely with secondary schools’ guidance teachers and came to the Secondary School Locality Forum in the place of Amber, her team leader:

I say how I noticed that Violet (Education Welfare Officer, Children and Families team) remembered a boy’s case (during the meeting) and I ask whether it’s because she has worked with his family. Violet says yes, and then explains to me how she would end up working with families. She says that she would meet with the guidance teacher every three weeks from whom she would get referrals. The meeting went something like looking at pupils with attendances lower than ninety percent but without explanations. Then she explains that the guidance teacher would set up the meeting, contact the parent to ask if Violet can come along, and then Violet would arrange to meet with guidance teacher and the family in the school.

(Secondary School Locality Forum, Fieldnotes)

In preparation for such meetings, an Education Welfare Officer or a Family Support Worker as part of the Children and Families team, would look into their database system at the Council (that is called *Frameworki*) to find information regarding the pupil’s family. If any family members had a history of contact with the Social Work division, for example receiving family support services, then there would be a record in *Frameworki*. The information that Violet brought to the meeting was based on her work (and perhaps that of other colleagues) with families.

The information that teachers and the Children and Families Team have are different. These professionals had different kinds of knowledge about a case, and they sourced it differently within their own organisations. The information that Violet could access about a child and his or her family was specific to the Children and Families team. Teachers will have a different picture of the child and the child's family due to differing contexts; the information each has is highly valuable. This makes contact and information sharing between the school and the Children and Families team worthy of having (see Thompson, 2016).

Contacts that Violet has with guidance teachers, and vice versa, enable information sharing and make these professionals key to the information processes of inter-agency working. Violet attended the meeting on behalf of Amber (Violet's team leader); Violet did not attend the meetings regularly. When Amber attended meetings, she would not have the same knowledge as Violet because she did not sit with the guidance teacher and meet with families; however, she could still provide information from the Council's database system, *Frameworki*. As with pupils' records, the database is also the formalised account of young people, though with a wider scope as it covers information about young people and their families who are known to the Social Work division (of which the Children and Families team is part). This is another example of depersonalisation. For the Locality Forum meeting to take place, the professional who knows the family is no longer needed, instead what needed is the depersonalised information in the database, which is decontextualised from the personal relationships.

It is not always the Family Support Worker who attends the Locality Forum Meetings. The following excerpt shows how Morag, also a Children and Families

Team Leader (like Amber), explains her process of gathering information in relation to a Family Support Worker role:

I ask Morag why she invited Sophie (family support worker) to the meeting; she says it's because Sophie was still working on the report (which was discussed during the meeting) and so Morag thought of taking her along as she was in the office at the time. Then I inquire why other family support workers didn't come along. Morag then says they have loads of work, and she could pull out the reports of each child/young people that would be discussed from the system (*Frameworki*).

(after Primary School Locality Forum, Informal Talk)

Morag led the Primary School Locality Forum that I attended and attributed Sophie's nonattendance to her workload as a Family Support Worker. This echoed what Violet once mentioned: she would prefer visiting families over attending meetings (Secondary School Locality Forum). Despite acquiring information directly from the family and, as Violet did, having more to say about the family than Morag would, Sophie was not usually required to attend the meeting because her information could be retrieved from *Frameworki*, as Morag noted.

Thus far, there are different ways for information about children and their families to arrive at Locality Forum meetings. Information has become a 'report', a referral, something that can be taken out from a computer system and out of the hands of the frontline professional. This is information in the form of the static accounts of the professionals. But cases were also discussed between professionals in meetings, meaning that information is also oral.

This section has examined the information that professionals discuss in Locality Forum meetings. This includes the sources of 'information' concerning pupils and

the role of teachers and the Children and Families team in producing information in the context of inter-agency working. The section has begun to explore what the *key people* do when they work with other professionals in implementing GIRFEC. This goes toward answering the second research question, which is what the Named Persons do when they work together with other professionals. Bearing in mind this duty was not yet in place during the fieldwork phase, this section has provided clues on who was involved and the way they worked with information when undertaking roles related to that of the Named Person.

This section has discussed some aspects of *power*, particularly in the process forming information through speech and written text. The rationalisation that is encouraged by information recording and ICT use suggests an efficient bureaucracy (Clegg, 1994), thus making professionals able to pull up information from the database system at Locality Forum meetings.

4.3. Enabling information sharing: professional judgement, administrative staff and technology

Many reviews on inter-agency working (e.g. Statham, 2011; Walker, 2008) look at information sharing as a key factor. This section discusses how the process of sharing information between professionals from different organisations takes into account the professionals' judgement and technological work that is facilitated by administrative staff.

4.3.1. Professional judgement

Professionals' workload is a challenge for inter-agency working (Warmington et al., 2004) because, more and more, resources in public services are stretched thin.

Professionals are concerned with getting their own jobs done, and often working with other professionals is taken to mean more meetings and communication, preventing them from getting other work done. That is why the multi-agency setting needs to be innovative in accommodating such challenges (Lowndes and Skelcher, 1998). However, innovation is not easy, as information sharing may result in action points for professionals and more information needing to be shared, as the following excerpt demonstrates:

Maureen explains that Debby lives with her grandmother (gran) and carefully explains that Debby was sexually assaulted by her grandad, who is now in prison for that act. As Maureen is talking, I see Helen (Children and Families Team Leader) nodding as if familiar with the case, she then says “enough court orders to keep us going for a lifetime”..... Janette (from CAHMS) asks whether an Educational Psychologist has been involved, to which Maureen responds with “yes, since the very beginning”. Janette asks Naomi (School Nurse Team Leader) when developmental delay can become a learning disability. Naomi reads from her notes and says she noted Debby has learning difficulties, which then prompts Helen to ask if that is diagnosed or...she stops (she shakes her head as if uncertain). Naomi, struggling to find something in her notes, replies that she will check again. Janette explains to Maureen that from her experience developmental delay can become a learning disability, but it is not always the case....Maureen says, “I need to have a review meeting about her. If nothing works I will go back to the edpsych (educational psychologist)”. Maureen says to Naomi that she would need the GP report, and Naomi says she will check whether it has been sent to school or not. Maureen continues, saying Debby cannot be in school another year without provision or strategies. When Helen asks whether to leave the case open for the forum or close it, Maureen chooses ‘wait and see’ (open).

(Primary School Locality Forum, Fieldnotes)

The information sharing in this context relied on the texts that each professional brought; gathered from the database (Helen), referral forms (Maureen), health reports (Naomi), professional's expertise (Janette) and personal knowledge (Maureen), added to the professional judgement Maureen expressed. This exchange also suggested a mechanism of transferring information from another setting, as Naomi told Maureen about the General Practitioner (GP) report. Therefore, meetings which bring different forms of information together can in themselves create more work, as more information may be required. Preoccupation with information sharing among children's services providers, which GIRFEC also shares, is at risk of turning the professionals into 'information workers' (Thompson, 2016, p42).

Although Maureen's decision to keep the case open for the Forum could be an indication that the meeting or sharing of information is additional work, the exchange in that meeting lead to her demonstrating her professional judgement to take responsibility over the case. Maureen's determination to make sure Debby would get additional support by referencing the school's review and the educational psychologist was part of enacting her professional remit, as Debby's head teacher. Thus Maureen's professional judgement is attached to her remit as a head teacher with knowledge of the strategies her school could put in place for Debby.

Maureen came out of that meeting knowing what to do but, sometimes, as additional information was shared in the Locality Forum meetings, she found exercising her professional judgement challenging. The following example is of a case being discussed with different professionals, each adding their own information. This example shows how a boy's circumstances become more complex as further information is shared:

Emile (a pupil) is on the CAMHS waiting list, says Maureen (Star Primary School Head Teacher). Janette (from CAMHS) responds after a quick look at her notes, “yes, for ADHD assessment”. Janette continues that she has spoken to the mum to refer Emile to the ‘Incredible Years Programme’, but Maureen and Helen (Children and Families Team Leader, chair of meeting) quickly says that mum? has had three appointments but didn’t show up. Janette looks surprised, saying “she (the mum) looked like she never heard of ‘Incredible Years’”....Janette then says that the mum wanted to move Emile from Star Primary School to Chapel Primary School. Maureen looks disappointed. Janette says that according to Emile’s mum, Emile said to her that it is his wish to move to Chapel. Then Dan (police officer) mentions that a call came in about Emile from his football coach. Dan explains that someone contacted the coach saying that Emile made sexual comments during practice. Helen then adds, while reading her notes, that the family has drug abuse problems. There is also an issue with the boy’s sister--sexual misconduct--and the mum was caught shoplifting and has alcohol misuse. After hearing all of that, Janette looks even more surprised and says that she has not heard of any of those things. Dan says that he came up with the information after checking on the (police database) system.

(Primary School Locality Forum, Fieldnotes)

The excerpt shows how Maureen and Janette had shared knowledge about Emile’s appointment with CAMHS. They retrieved the information from their own institutions; Maureen retrieved information from school and Janette from CAMHS. Helen and Dan had done the same prior to the meeting, but their information was different. The information that Dan provided was sourced from the report that Emile’s coach had made to the police. Meanwhile, Helen provided information she had retrieved from the Council database regarding Emile’s family. Due to the different ways of sourcing information, each professional in that meeting added a

‘piece’ towards the picture of Emile. Information should thus be seen as pieces and not as the whole picture. The more complex a case the more pieces (information) it has. More pieces do not make up a complete picture (see Thompson, 2016). Moreover, a ‘piece’ of information itself can be unstable (Thompson, 2016, p113). For example, Janette had assumed that Emile’s mum would take him to ‘Incredible Years’ programme and yet she was surprised to hear from Maureen and Helen that this was not the case. Thus, Janette’s ‘piece’ of information about Emile had changed while Emile’s situation remained complex.

Emile’s picture became increasingly complex as information about him and his family members was revealed in the meeting. In the context of a multi-agency meeting such as that of the Locality Forum shown above, information sharing could change or add to professionals’ understanding of the case, as indicated by Janette’s surprise regarding information she had not known, but a complete picture is not gained. Instead, Emile’s picture becomes more complex and sustains uncertainty for action. Hood (2014) says that “complexity for professionals also means having to deal with uncertainty.... Yet, uncertainty is an inevitable part of professional judgement” (p33). The complexity underlying Emile’s case creates an uncertain terrain for the professionals, especially for Maureen as the Head Teacher. In such a situation, professionals are called upon, and must rely on their own analysis and judgement (White, 2009). Professional judgement means more than simply finding out what ‘really happened’ and deciding how to respond. Rather, it requires questioning pre-existing knowledge as well as adjudicating between facts and the socio-emotional context of the professional themselves (Taylor and White, 2001).

Professional judgement is influenced by a professional's experiences and perceptions (Walker, 2008), and these factors contribute to their interpretation of certain concepts. In the context of the inter-agency working I observed in Ballian, such judgement is present in a professional's everyday work. For example, a head teacher's decision to refer a case to the Locality Forum started with their professional judgement that there was a problem. Although different readings of information can cause confusion, the multi-professional discussion can help clarifying the problem (Thompson, 2016). Since the idea of "wellbeing" has a wide-scope (Coles et al., 2016), professionals' judgement and multi-professional discussion are crucial, especially when implementing the Named Person provision (I will discuss this more in Chapter 6).

Matilda, the GIRFEC Development Officer in Ballian, makes an important point that information sharing can also take place between the same kind of agency but in different local authorities. In this context, the multi-professional discussion is absent. The following excerpt is from an interview where she explained why she thought it was useful for information to be shared across local authorities:

Matilda: Because you know, people move a lot and often people that move, move for the reason that they don't want to be in the system. They don't want to be known by the social work department. Things go wrong, so therefore...you do get families who move from one area to another when things get too hot. When things get difficult, they just move, you know. And that can be a real delay, especially if you've got a young person or an older person, you know who there's significant risk for, **how do you manage those risks if you don't know about them** [emphasis added]. You know?! You may not know for three or four weeks when a family, has gone, you know?! You're sending emails, as a social worker, you might try continue to find that

family and then discover that actually they have moved to Ballian. And then how do you...by the time you get in touch with Ballian, Ballian might not know the family at all. So look at the delay here. You could have people with significant risks involved, so it's trying to avoid things like that. That's my understanding.

(Matilda, GIRFEC Development Officer, Interview)

Matilda perceives information sharing as helping manage risks, she emphasises sharing information as a precautionary action. Matilda's perspective is that sharing information can help minimise risk by identifying concerns early and sharing them in case reviews on child protection cases is in line with GIRFEC policy ideals (see Scottish Government, 2014b). A lack of information sharing between agencies has contributed to professionals' poor risk assessment (Munro, 2011). From the excerpt, professionals' power over information can be considered in light of Weber's concept of *domination* (see Hearn, 2012). Domination is the form of power that results in compliance, implicit in the professionals' control over information is their compliance to their organisations' system of processing information.

The excerpt also shows how information could travel with people, if they move location, if information is shared. But those who made the information travel were workers: council staff and teachers, not the people to whom the information belongs (i.e. information subjects). These professionals, then, have to make sure the information travels according to the Data Protection Act 1998, equal to their decision regarding the importance of sharing such information (Walker, 2008). There is interplay between professional judgement and personal relations and ICT in the process of information sharing. As Matilda points out the complexity of information

sharing in the context inter-agency working, I argue that power over information is operating within bureaucracies that connect the agencies/authorities.

Despite all the legislation that regulates the actions of professionals with regard to information sharing (Walker, 2008), professionals can make mistakes that can have dire consequences. In Peter Connely's¹⁶ case, the GP's assumption that other professionals working with the boy had the same knowledge he had, and thus were in a better position to share the information and take action, had deadly consequences (Sellgren, 2010). This does not mean all information must be shared. In the context of universal services such as schools, what limits professionals from seeking or sharing information concerning pupils' wellbeing is not straightforward, as I have shown earlier.

A combination of exercising professional judgement, focussing on intervention at school and a functioning inter-agency working scheme has allowed teachers (Maureen, Wanda and Eleanor) to locate themselves within broader welfare issues, which they are aware often provide explanations for young people's behaviour at school. An education staff member in Robin Locality notes that working with other professionals benefits the information sharing process. This excerpt provides a good example of how being on the same team enables Olga, a Principal Teacher for Behaviour Support, to communicate easily with the Family Support Worker:

Harla: I noticed when I was in the forum, some cases related to the family support worker. How do you get in touch, are you in touch with the family support worker?

¹⁶ Peter Connely was a 17-month-old boy who, in August 2007, died in London from injuries caused (or allowed) by his mother, the mother's partner and a lodger (Sellgren, 2010).

Olga: Absolutely. We used to be...before we were about eleven, twelve miles away, over in Fields we worked together. The family support workers were here... (Harla: Oh, okay)...and then we moved here to Robin. I was based in Robin High School, what was called the integration team at that point. So it would be behaviour support... usually, two or three psychologists link to the locality as well, the family support workers and integration team manager, so we were all together as a locality. There were four areas of the authority. So now we've come together, there are two areas. There's Snows, the East team and ourselves, the West. So we're here, and the family support workers are just out there (pointing to people outside her office room). So it's ideal, we have face-to-face conversations (Harla: Okay). So the communication's good because we're here together. So that's an important aspect of the process.

(Olga, Principal Teacher for Behaviour Support at Robin Locality, Interview)

Family support workers did not attend the Locality Forum; however Olga (the Principal Teacher for Behaviour Support) did. The excerpt shows how being in the same location (Robin Locality) with the family support workers made it easier for Olga to communicate concerns about children and families, and vice versa. Co-location, in this way, is good for enabling communication among professionals. Also, there have been studies that found that co-location improves information sharing (Thompson, 2016). However, co-location can have problems for professionals, as working together can sometimes convolute their roles (Davis, 2011).

Olga also mentioned the integration team that she used to be part of. Being part of that team is another way in which co-location enabled her to communicate with family support workers. I found further evidence for this while observing the Locality Forum Meetings, a space for professionals to share information. This is discussed in depth in Chapter 5.

Different codes and attitudes towards sharing information have created challenges (Anning et al., 2010, p107). In addition, differing procedures and standards regarding when to share information adds to the complexity of this process (Walker, 2008). The challenge for professionals is to share information proportionally. Guidelines can be helpful, but guidelines cannot be context specific, and in multi-agency working situations context varies (Walker, 2008).

The recent UK Supreme Court decision against the Named Person's information sharing provision questions the threshold for professionals sharing information regarding children and young people (*The Christian Institute and others v The Lord Advocate* [2016] UKSC 51). The basis for the Supreme Court decision is that the Named Person's information sharing provision was found to violate the rights of information subjects, i.e. children and families, as stipulated in Article 8 of the *European Convention on Human Rights*. The Court finds the Named Person statutory guidelines and primary legislation on information sharing insufficient because it sets too low threshold (concerns about wellbeing): a matter of concern that had been raised during the consultancy period of the then Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill (Davis et al., 2014). In addition, the statutory guidelines have been criticised for their lack of operational clarity (Jackson, 2016).

The Named Person scheme has the good intention of bringing services 'closer' to children and families by minimising bureaucracy for them: having one person with whom they can talk about the child or young person wellbeing concerns and support needs, instead of going to different meetings to talk repeatedly about the same concerns/support needs. But the Named Person is not, and in many case will not be, able to ensure children and families get the services they need, because services

provided by agencies of the Named Persons may not suit their needs. The complexity of problems that children and families have often requires multi-agency support, and will remain so even when the Named Person scheme is implemented. The Named Person does not have the power to deploy resources, which is why they are in a coordinating relationship with other professionals. In light of this, what would be the justification to share information?

Walker (2008) notes that proportionality is paramount in a professional's decision to share information, and that assessing this proportionality depends on one's judgement. Proportionality, in this case, refers to the decision to share specific pieces of information from many or, to put it another way, proportionality means deciding the relevance of information to be shared. An example of this would be, "a health visitor concerned that a child may be suffering significant harm from neglect can share information relating to the health and welfare of the child, their development, the condition of the house and so on, but should refrain from telling the social worker receiving the telephone call that the mother is having an affair with the milkman (if it were true), unless this is in some way directly relevant to the neglect of the child" (Walker, 2008, p127). But this example also shows how difficult it is to decide on relevance. Thus, professional judgement means constantly questioning oneself and the information and judgement of other professionals, i.e. in the locality forum meetings. Other professionals are employees of organisations who have their own procedures of making sure information stays confidential when necessary, and ways to seek consent from information subjects (Anning et al., 2010). Thus when these professionals work together, they are interconnected through complex bureaucracies or a network of *ruling relations*. As a reminder, *ruling relations* are "relations that

coordinate people's activities across and beyond local sites of everyday experience”
(Smith, 2002, p45).

The following excerpt is from my interview with Hana, a Lifelong Learning and Employability Officer at Ballian Council, on her role in supporting a young person. It is vivid in the way it shows how exercising a professional judgement is not easy:

Hana: each individual (young person) is really different about how you approach it. A couple of years ago there was a girl who was in a leaving school project (which Hana organised), it was really, really great and then things just went out of control. And I met with her, for a few Mondays, doing one-to-one, it's really difficult. Nothing was really coming out of it. She wasn't talking. I just had to say to the school 'this isn't... this is not the best for me to work with her. I think she's just not ready to open up about what's affecting her or she's not able to articulate it or maybe she just doesn't know that, but...she knows that I can be there, I can take her out.' She quite enjoyed fitness, I told her to go for a walk, for a chat, for a run so she doesn't feel under pressure, but nothing at all. But some young people have been through so many systems and moved from pillar to post, different families, it's actually tricky for them. So yeah, I will do, I really will do anything that is trying to support a young person to just have some kind of positive outcome, but with this young person it was just not working. And it is tricky, sometimes it just goes great, 'I'll talk to you for an hour, just to listen to me' whereas others [shaking her head]. They (the young people) are very protective, obviously, of their family. They don't want anybody know what's going on or sometimes they don't actually realise what's going on for them is not normal. Obviously if there was ever any instance where I became aware of Child Protection concerns – I always say to young people, 'this meeting is confidential, however, if there's any concern of your wellbeing then I need to follow Child Protection Guidelines.'

(Hana, Lifelong Learning and Employability Officer at Ballian Council, Interview)

Hana's account of the young person she worked with is interesting in that she can describe the young person's behaviours, she knows what the person likes doing and she notices the change in that young person's behaviours. Hana also shows her own knowledge about what a young person could experience in general. However, there is a problem for professionals if young people do not provide 'data' that could be processed into relevant 'information'. This is the limitation of professional's information and judgement. In relation to Foucault's ideas of power, this limitation also shows how power operates through the procedures of information recording/sharing in deciding which information fit into the bureaucratic discourse.

There are many reasons for young people not to share information or to change their behaviour toward the professionals working with them (see Hill and Morrison, 2012). Although Hana's work experience has enabled her to detect something is wrong and she is aware of child protection procedures but information through her interaction with the young person is what she needs to decide in what way she could support that young person. Hana shows that exercising professional judgement at the frontline requires information based on interaction with service users that is not easy and can be prone to disruption.

In an inter-agency context, individual agencies not only have different kinds of information, but sometimes even the same words can mean different things. This is made explicit in the following quotation from Matilda, Ballian's GIRFEC

Development Officer:

Matilda: For example, I was at a meeting...I only attended one inter-agency portal meeting, and it was at a stage where we had a consultant from Sick Kids [charity organisation], and he was speaking to the group about a simple

thing as putting on a form “parent/main carer”. Now, to somebody in school, you would immediately think that means somebody who has a parental right for a child. But in health or social work, “main carer” could be a person going in three times a day to look after somebody, right?!. **So what we think is a common language, actually to different agencies it means different things** [emphasis added]. So they have to thrash out that level of detail to ensure that the forms are understood by everybody. And that there’s a common language.

(Matilda, GIRFEC Development Officer, Interview)

Children and Families Team Leaders used concepts and categories in Ballian’s stages of GIRFEC intervention (i.e. Stage 1, Stage 2 or Stage 3) confidently. This confidence was not shared; the team leaders used the concepts in their daily professional work, but they were not the everyday language of teachers. In multi-agency working, having a common language is considered beneficial; this is also the case for GIRFEC’s approach (Scottish Government, 2012a). But having a common language has been argued as problematic because different organisations have different ways of working and operating language (Davis and Smith, 2012; Hudson, 2007), and professionals come from different training systems and disciplines. Furthermore, in the context of working with other professionals where increased innovation and creativity are increased, flexible work processes may be more important to achieve (Davis and Smith, 2012).

On one occasion, a primary head teacher came to the Primary School Forum at Robin for the first time. She came to discuss a pupil who had behavioural problems, in which a CAMHS staff member (attending the meeting) said it was likely to be Attention Deficit Disorder, but the teacher did not provide enough information. Morag, who was leading the Forum in place of Helen, said it was a ‘Stage 2

intervention' (referring to Ballian's three stages of intervention) and suggested the teacher contact the Educational Psychologist. The excerpt indicates that Morag thought the teacher should not refer the case:

Morag suggested to the teacher that the pupil should get support from the school. I ask Morag why she suggested that, to which she replies, 'The teacher didn't know. She never came to the Forum before. That's definitely Stage 2'. This situation makes me think, Amber and Morag in separate Forum meetings, were the ones who confidently used 'Stage 2' or 'Stage 3', and they are the one using them in the meetings I have observed so far.

(after Primary School Locality Forum, Informal Talk)

Having the 'new' teacher in that meeting made me think of how Morag's perception towards the teacher's unknowing is related to the different work settings between the Children and Families team and schools. Although GIRFEC has been implemented nationally, not all teachers have the same understanding nor all local authorities implement it the same way (Education Scotland, 2012). In addition, GIRFEC already produces tension for professionals as it is implemented because of its wellbeing centred approach, among others (Coles et al., 2016). However, those whose work was constantly referred to GIRFEC were the Children and Families team at the Council, as the following excerpt shows:

Amber: We've covered all these national legislations and policies (e.g. Children and Young People Act 2014 and ASL Act 2009) and then I suppose a number of theories, especially the systems theory, because the systems theory is grounded on our GIRFEC framework (Harla: I see), so we've got stages one, two, three. The systems theory and reflective practice are right there with the assessment but also a number of these theories are all...especially Piaget and Vygotsky (Harla: Psychology...) ...and the Rogers

is the whole personal set of planning they've got the educational psychologists are doing. So it fits in a lot of that. But the Maslow hierarchy of needs are the basic SHANARRI. So when you look at...when you look at Maslow and then you go across, Maslow and Bowlby, and you go across to (pointing at picture of My World Triangle on the board) principles and values of ...my world triangle. They all...(Harla: Fit in) fit in and along with the resilience matrix, these are all part of the GIRFEC policy that we have in place.

(Amber, Children and Families Team Leader, Interview)

The excerpt shows how well-informed Amber is with the relevant legislation and concepts of GIRFEC and child development. She is able to make connections between the concepts. In a sense, Amber and her team's work is to implement GIRFEC. However, this is not necessarily shared by every professional who is part of the Locality Forum, as Hana noted.

Hana was a Lifelong Learning and Employability Officer at Ballian Council. This is an excerpt showing her understanding about Ballian's 'stages of intervention' (Ballian, 2010). It is Ballian's framework for implementing GIRFEC. Stage 1 is for universal services, such as health and education, which are available to all children and young people. It implements a single-agency approach, such as the school service. Stage 2 refers to universal service with additional support. It is targeted support within universal services (for example, additional support learning for the pupil). Stage 3 is integrated support provided by more than one agency; an example of this is multi-agency support and registration for children going into child protection. Thus a closer look at the recording and sharing of information in each and across the 'stages of intervention' shows how power operates in the social relations

that make professionals work together (see Hardy, 1996). I will elaborate this further in Chapter 5.

Stage 2 corresponds to Pupil Referral Group (PRG) meetings held at schools, and

Stage 3 corresponds to Locality Forum meetings:

Harla: I'd like to ask about the 'stages of intervention'. I often hear in meetings, usually the team leader mentions 'this is Stage 2' and so on. I wonder if other members understand what these stages are?

Hana: It's interesting actually. That's probably a good point. In my time, probably about 3 or 4 years, there's never actually been an introduction to what these meetings (stages) are. I suppose...

Harla: What do you mean an introduction?

Hana: I mean for people who are new to the group. I mean yes we've been told it is for supporting young people and they're brought to the meeting to see what we can pull together, but actually because I don't work with the stages (of intervention) all the time and it's a bit about my learning...my dyslexia is about retention of information, I'm not very good at....But maybe I should be finding out and have it written down.

(Hana, Lifelong Learning and Employability Officer at Ballian Council, Interview)

During my observations, Hana had attended PRG and Locality Forum meetings at Sisters High School. She understood the purpose of the meetings she attended; however, she could not relate the meetings with the stages of interventions the Council had in place. Unlike Amber, Hana did not use the stages in her daily work.

Although Ballian's "Evaluation of Locality Forums," states that multi-agency discussions form strong working relationships with other agencies (referred to as

‘stakeholders’) (Ballian Council, 2013), some of the evaluation findings were raised by the Children and Family team leaders. One is the lack of reference to ‘stages of intervention’ (in the evaluation document it is called the “staged support system”) as Ballian’s GIRFEC implementation framework and SHANARRI¹⁷ language in referrals to Locality Forums (Ballian Council, 2015). GIRFEC promotes the use of a common language, that is based on GIRFEC’s National Practice Model, to support the process of information gathering and sharing (Scottish Government, 2012a). However, Hana’s point on not using the ‘stages of intervention’ in her everyday work suggests that the idea of a common language for better information sharing is contested in the context of inter-agency working.

In studies about integrated working or inter-agency collaboration and Institutional Ethnography, the differing use of language between professionals can create challenges in communication. Language that social workers use is different to that which health practitioners use when treating patients who are also receiving social work support. These professionals’ understanding of shared terms is diluted into their communication, and mediated through shared forms. Meetings then became the place to exchange information beyond what is on the form. As such, meetings provide an avenue to build professional relationships (Freeman, 2008). Sharing different professional understandings of shared concepts and terms has been suggested as a way to overcome professional differences in inter-agency working (Anning et al., 2010).

¹⁷ SHANARRI is the eight wellbeing indicators that are the backbone of GIRFEC. It stands for Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, Included.

Furthermore, one of the challenges for practitioners in implementing GIRFEC is the wide scope of the term ‘wellbeing’ (Coles et al., 2016). Again, this challenge has been highlighted in the recent UK Supreme Court Judgment against the Named Person’s information sharing provisions (The Christian Institute and others v The Lord Advocate [2016] UKSC 51, para. 95). The Court calls the “wellbeing” and the SHANARRI indicators of the 2014 Act as having a very wide scope, and therefore urge that the Named Person service provides clarity in activities related to information and support. Such activities include, but are not limited to, assessing and sharing information, and offering advice. The Court points out problems with information sharing on the basis of the insufficient baseline from which interference or judgement can be challenged and assessed (para. 97, para. 107).

To summarise, I have argued that a ‘common language’ is not shared in the way schools and the Children and Families team worked together. Interestingly, that is why multi-agency work is suggested as a place to discuss and find commonalities (Walker, 2008). The Children and Families team are competent in using the language set in GIRFEC policy documents because their work is closely related. However, other professionals were not likely to have the same understanding as they lacked the knowledge or were not used to using GIRFEC concepts in their professional remit. This condition suggests the power that Children and Families team has over discourse, and how their role is key in the operation of ruling relations as they ensure the professionals’ working together is coordinated according to GIRFEC policy.

Thus far, the section has answered my first research question regarding what inter-agency working looks like within the institutional relations of GIRFEC implementation. As Ballian Council’s GIRFEC implementation brought its Children

and Families team into working together relationships with other agencies, the team ensured that the Council's GIRFEC framework was applied as they and other professionals exchanged information. In that same situation, information sharing happened and professionals' judgements were interrogated.

4.3.2. The administrative staff and technology

So far, focussing on professionals within the settings of school and the Children and Families team: head or deputy head, guidance teachers and Children and Families Team Leaders and members (i.e. Family Support Worker/Education Welfare Officer) is considered to be 'key' because these people are in the information processes that enable information to travel in the form of notes, forms or from databases. This is especially true for teachers because they are placed between the first source (i.e. children and families) and other professionals in the information process. They each have a piece (or pieces) of the puzzle regarding a case; they are responsible for raising concern or making the referral that puts them in touch with other professionals.

Additionally there is the administrative staff, especially those in Children and Families team. Their role is crucial in managing information that the 'key' people use in meetings, and which will ultimately generate referral forms. The following excerpt is from an informal talk with Neve, a member of administrative staff in the Children and Families team. It is particularly useful in illustrating the process of recording information in *Frameworki* and who is involved in the process:

Neve walks me through how *Frameworki* works. She explains what each folder means and she shows me the code used to screen which case would be used in the meeting. For example, EIO: Early Intervention Officer is a code

for a non-offending case, which later on would be screened for the screening group meeting for non-offending children and young people. Meanwhile YJO: Youth Justice Officer, for offending children and young people, will go to the screening group for offending cases. She then explains to me the importance of her checking the original Police report because the Admin (the one who first put up the report) might make a mistake. Then there's a section called "incident" where the Admin should add a summary from the Police report (this section showed up in the minutes of screening group meetings).

(Neve, Ballian's member of administrative staff, Informal Talk)

The excerpt describes how *Frameworki* works: it is dependent on the input from administrative staff. However just because some information is not shared it does not mean it is not useful 'information'. Instead, this can be understood as the process of filtering (Wattam, 1997). Neve has to select information that fits the format of *Frameworki*, but more than that, it is clear that Neve is competent in filtering information from *Frameworki* to fit the Screening Group template. She is also competent in assessing the accuracy of information. Therefore, her administrative role carries with it the 'power' to process the information according to the need of the Screening Group and the format of the *Frameworki*. Power, in this context, can be seen as working through the procedures that include burgeoning technological requirements. The process of filtering information is also a key aspect of power. This goes beyond earlier discussion on professionals' role in deciding what information is. Here, Neve and other member of administrative staff also decide what information will stay in the database.

For the Locality Forum at Sisters High School, Amber explained to me (in one of our informal conversations) that after each Secondary School Locality Forum meeting

minutes sent out describing each pupil who was discussed; there would be a separate form for each. The Administrative staff at the Children and Families team would then update their database with this information. On the school's side:

Amber asks Moira (a teacher at Sisters High School) about her experience as admin for the Secondary School Locality Forum in that school. Moira says "fine", adding that it has required her to do a bit more work to complete the information on a Locality Forum referral form for every pupil. But Moira says her strategy is to start working on it before the Forum's meeting starts, then add information after.

(Secondary School Locality Forum Evaluation meeting, Fieldnotes)

The way information is assessed and recorded in this context of inter-agency working shows the importance of having someone taking an administrative role. In this case, the role is at the hands of Moira, a teacher where the Locality Forum takes place: Sisters High School. Her task in adding information to the referral form before and after the Locality Forum meetings suggests similarity to Neve's task in filtering information for *Frameworki*. It is similar in that Moira has to have information about the pupils, whose Locality Forum referral forms she completes, from the school's database. She would choose what information to add to the forms based on the form's format. Following the Forum meeting, Moira will add information to the forms (see Appendix 8). Meanwhile, Neve received information from a Police Report or what other administrative staff had added to the database and then updates it after the Screening Group meeting. Moira's role was acknowledged by Hana, a Lifelong Learning and Employability Officer at Ballian Council:

Harla: Do you get any minutes after PRGs or Forum meetings?

Hana: Oh yeah, Moira's fantastic (the school teacher who takes minutes at the meetings). Minutes are sent out the same day.

Harla: Is that discussing the individual child, or...?

Hana: It's notes of each individual child. So it's a copy of the Referral Form and then there's a part on it for further action. That's done really promptly.

Harla: That's helpful?

Hana: Absolutely, and kind of makes sure what you said you'd do.

(Hana, Lifelong Learning and Employability Officer at Ballian Council, Interview)

Moira's work not only involved providing a summary of the discussion but also providing a reminder for other professionals of the action points they might need to take. Reviews of social work practice have raised concerns that policy and developments in computer technology have moved professionals away from reliance on their judgement for accountability and prescribed procedures (see for example, Garrett, 2005; Munro, 2011; Thompson, 2016). This is discussed further in Section 4.4 of this chapter.

This section has shown that the need for more information is the reason teachers engage in inter-agency working. In so doing, they recognise different information specific to each organisation. However, there will never be a complete picture, which is why professional judgement is important. Contact with other professionals gives teachers justification for taking further action. Having different information located in different organisations shows how a young person's life is dynamic, and as such solutions to their problems cannot be simple. Again, this suggests that professional

judgement is an important factor in dealing with information about young people and their families.

Thompson (2016) argues that information sharing is complex; its performance can be traced in the everyday practices of child professionals, and understanding its complexity requires an understanding of human factors. I extend this analysis by locating the professionals within the procedures of their own organisations and in their relationships with other professionals. In so doing I map the inter-agency working mechanism they are part of.

The process of identifying and receiving concerns are complex, involving different professionals and different procedures for information processes. Figure 9 summarises the relationship between the two settings, the school and the Children and Families team, in the context of information sharing.

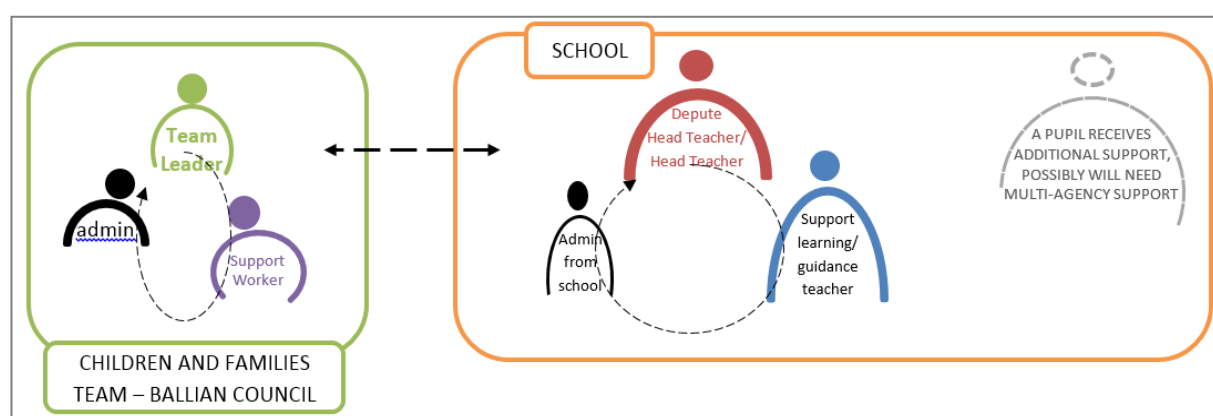


Figure 9. The two settings for exploring the ways in which professionals work together

I have discussed in this section that within the Children and Families team, the team leader, the family support worker/education welfare officer and administrative staff

are key people in the information processes. In the school, the pupil, teachers have concerns about, is given the 'greyscale' effect on the figure because the information (arrow mark) about them that is discussed within the school and then shared to the Children and Families team is the teachers' accounts or retrieved from the school database. The pupils were not present in the process of sharing information that my informants explained in this chapter. Using a Secondary School as an example, the deputy head teacher, the guidance teacher and the teacher taking the administrative role at the Locality Forum meetings are key to the information processes that include identifying concerns and sharing information to the Children and Families team. In return, the Children and Families team will share information they have regarding the pupil and their family members to the teachers through direct communication, such as between the education welfare officer and guidance teacher, or in a formal context of Locality Forum meetings. This section has begun to show how power manifests in the key people's day-to-day process of recording information and in their information sharing processes that involve forms and ICT (see Gilbert and Powell, 2010). The manifestation of power can be seen since the 'creation' of information within schools, but then the filtering process is also a key aspect of power as members of administrative staff decide what information is to be brought in inter-agency meetings and what not.

4.4. Implications for Named Person

In relation to the Named Person's role, primary school head teachers like Wanda and Eleanor are likely to become the Named Person. Unfortunately, the debates around this role tend to take these teachers out of the context of their daily job. For example, the Named Person's responsibility to make an initial assessment and to receive

information is perceived as harnessing power – a policing role rather than a supporting role (Stoddart, 2015). This argument overlooks the analysis where I have shown that teachers’ assessment of information is part of their professional remit, because the information comes from an initial assessment that is taking place at school on a daily basis.

The following excerpt shows explicit commentary about how the Named Person provision would change the way information is recorded, and hints at the practical issues that change may entail:

Amber (Children and Families Team Leader) gives an update on the Named Person legislation. There has been a trial phase in another locality where Police reports have started coming directly to schools. She then says to the group that how concerns are recorded will now be changed into using a new wellbeing concerns form. Amber continues with what she calls “the biggest concern”, which is admin (the person). She says, “how do you manage reports coming in, who sorts it out and who’s going to be Named Person. Can I be one? Not of pride but I’ve been doing (the role).” She then answers her own question, “No no, has to be senior management in school. But 13 weeks that the school is off, then (the Named Person) would be me”.

(Secondary School Locality Forum, Fieldnotes).

The change involves a standard way of recording concerns by means of a new Wellbeing Concerns Form (Appendix 10a). The excerpt focusses not on this new form but on the administrative practicalities of it. In light of this change, Amber’s idea of the task for administrative staff would include receiving and sorting information, in the form of reports. The reports can be in the format of the new Wellbeing Concerns Forms that she mentioned earlier, or police reports that have started coming in to schools, as trialled in another locality.

Different administrative staff deal with information differently. This provides not only a cautionary note for the Named Person, but also for the complexity of the Named Person functions. The Revised Draft Statutory Guidance (Scottish Government, 2015) states:

Paragraph 4.1.20: The support of the Named Person comes into play if the child or parent seeks advice or support, if the Named Person identifies a wellbeing need, or if others provide information or raise concerns about the child's wellbeing.

The role suggests that the Named Person service runs the danger of creating an 'information worker' (Thompson, 2016, p42). The very reason these teachers engage in information sharing is to enrich their knowledge – to help them better their judgement; they source the information they need. The fact that as a Named Person they would be dealing with a lot of information, because one of their roles is to receive concerns from other professionals, is problematic.

Technology development in children's services has been linked with transformations in public services as part of the New Labour agenda, which in turn is linked with the 'surveillance state', where children and parents feel the state's invasion (Garrett, 2009). Recently in Scotland the 'surveillance' element has been linked with discussion on the Named Person (Stoddart, 2015). However, professionals need to be able to assess what information they need before making decisions on what support they can give to children and families (Walker, 2008). This often means obtaining information outside of their organisation. Because professionals who are going to be the Named Person are located in schools (in this research), the Named Person scheme will be built on existing working mechanisms to help them perform their

roles. This is what happened in Ballian. The support included improving access to *Frameworki*, but with security measures in place, as the following suggests:

Matilda: In education we now have a system where we...some schools, after training, can access folders and *Frameworki*. A set of folders, specifically made up in order to be confidential information. And once the head teacher in primary, and the deputy head and guidance staff at secondary, once they have the training, they can go and access these folders. The IT wouldn't let anybody near them until they have been trained by them. Alright?! So that process is ongoing and after August, what we need to do is we need to train the groups that...some have been trained, and some already start to use the system, okay?! The other priority is to find a way of allowing the systems to speak to each other. Finding a system where everybody can put everything in one place, and there is what's called an interagency portal group, and what they are doing is, they're looking at a system in [4 local authorities, including Ballian] across health, social work and education, and they want to find a system where all three will be able to speak to each other securely.

(Matilda, Ballian's GIRFEC Development Officer, Interview)

Using technology in children's services has seen benefits for practitioners, for example in the use of a database (Garrett, 2005). However, it also has limitations, as the following excerpt shows. Neve, a member of administrative staff for the Children and Families team, explained how to trace how a case came to be discussed in the Screening Group for Non-Offending Children and Young People, and how the system is updated from the minutes of the group meetings:

Although the decision in the meeting is, for example NFA (No Further Action) or case closed, Neve might not be able to close the case if other staff were still using the case. "It (the *Frameworki*) won't allow me", she says.

We choose one case example where Neve shows me how the input is done. Neve says, the admin staff in each locality should input the data from the Police report. This is the first screening. Each locality has their own admin person who screens Police reports (which are entitled POLICE CONCERN REPORT). Neve then says that if a case already has an allocated worker, it should not be included in the (Screening Group) meeting, she then adds, “but the admin worker (who screens the reports) doesn’t know that.”.

(Neve, a member of Ballian’s administrative staff, Informal Talk)

This excerpt shows how Neve’s work is important in making sure the process of recording information for the Screening Group is accurate and also how such a process immediately linked Neve to other staff work within the Council. Neve told me that in addition to Police reports, the same procedure would apply to, for example, referral from a Voluntary Organisation who primarily works with adults with substance abuse problems and yet have concerns about their clients’ children. Furthermore, the excerpt also shows how technology comes into play in decision making relations that complicate professionals’ work. The following excerpt explains this further, again demonstrating the important role of an administrator, not only in the database management process but also in deciding what information matters. As bureaucracies around the Locality Forum depend on administrators’ work around information, thus the role of an administrator is potentially increased in the *ruling relations*. Although technology can be useful, staff have to be careful when using it. The following excerpt shows how an administrator’s work is closely connected to the work of other professionals in the context of updating information on *Frameworki*:

So the process of updating *Frameworki* from the minutes is in Excel format, Neve has to send it to the chair (of the meeting) to get approval or discuss something that wasn’t clear or if Neve thinks a decision needs to be amended.

For example, in the last meeting I attended, Elisabeth (who's chairing) said a case's action was IRD (Initial Referral Discussion), or in other words 'considered as a child protection case', but she would discuss it first with a duty social worker. Neve says to me that the case can't be IRD if Elisabeth was still going to discuss it first with the social worker, so they agreed to change the action note into CARRY FORWARD. After the approval of the chair, only then was Neve able to put up the updates/action notes up onto *Frameworki*.

(Neve, a member of Ballian's administrative staff, Informal Talk)

The complexities of Neve's work can create boundaries for professionals' work. However, her work also connects professionals who have been working with the child or family who was discussed in a Screening Group meeting. Neve's use of technology works in coordinating the relationships of the professionals in children's services (Garrett, 2009). On the other hand, the use of technology has been linked with 'surveillance', as posed by the critics of Named Person (Stoddart, 2015; Waiton, 2016). I have shown that teachers work with information systems on a daily basis, such as recording attendance, creating pastoral notes and so on. This has been used as a way for guidance teachers to monitor pupils' behaviour. This kind of 'surveillance' is already happening. On this note, surveillance is an effect of power that operates through the school's information recording and sharing processes. However, putting the 'surveillance' of information into context requires looking at how information is used. The following excerpt shows how the pupils' records could instigate communication with parents:

Eleanor: ... We [the school] have our own electronic system, within that there's also a referral process [in relation to positive discipline strategy]. The guidance teacher can see if a class teacher is referring someone to another

teacher because they were misbehaving. So the guidance teacher can have an overview and they can see ‘pupil X has had six referrals this week, what’s going on here?’ So they have that overview, they’d probably phone home and say ‘I’m a bit concerned, I’m hearing this, can you have a word with them’. If it’s escalating, parents would be invited into school and we can issue a formal disciplinary warning, which a parent has to come to.

(Eleanor, Sisters High School Deputy Head Teacher, Interview)

The pupils’ records are the basis for the guidance teacher to make contact with parents as part of their job. This is a teacher acting on her knowledge, identifying a concern early; this fits the ideals of GIRFEC (e.g. Scottish Government, 2008, 2014b). Meanwhile, critics of the Named Person use ‘surveillance’ broadly in assuming that the Named Person have the ‘power’ to monitor and take action to ‘punish’ parents (Waiton, 2016). If the Named Person’s role is to be embedded in head teachers’ or guidance teachers’ day-to-day jobs (Scottish Government, 2016), the question should be whether the existing practice that Eleanor explained is surveillance or a supportive role as part of the guidance teachers’ professional remit (Wilson et al., 2004).

Regarding the power of the professionals, I have discussed the professionals and their role with regard to information – both producing and sharing. All head teachers, guidance teachers, depute head teachers, Children and Families team leaders, family support workers and administrative staff play a role in deciding how information is recorded, stored and shared. But understanding the importance of each role must take into account the role of other professionals who are part of the Locality Forum meetings (as well as classroom teachers). Their accounts of children and families, along with their expertise, have shown how complex and dynamic information about

young people can be. This understanding of power again reminds us of Weber's *domination* as power operates through control over information (see page 164). Also, Weber's concept of *bureaucracy* is evident as these professionals' roles in recording, storing and sharing information are in compliance with their own organisations' procedures of processing information. In this information sharing between professionals, power is decentred as it operates through mechanisms (i.e. locality forums) that regulate the professionals' way of sharing information.

Inspired by Klein's (1998) study on naturalistic decision making, the exercise of 'power' is based on the experiences of the key people. In my research, experienced professionals, such as head teachers or Children and Families team leaders, blended their years of experience into the expertise that made them able to suggest workable action even in ill-informed, ever changing situations, such as children's lives (Klein, 1998). However, as argued earlier, not all professionals make the right decisions all the time. In fact, in child abuse or death cases, we often see professionals lose their jobs, as they are found responsible for not sharing information or taking the right actions (Thompson, 2016).

In his analytical review of studies about power, Hearn (2012) distinguished between studies into power *over* something or some people, and power *to do* something.

Power is about exercising control or authority. My focus in this chapter is control over information. Subsequently, power should enable professionals to get the information they need, but I have shown the complexities of such a process. The power of sharing, keeping or recording information is not attached to individual head teachers or to other Ballian Council staff. Instead, the sharing of information takes places in the relations between professionals in school and those in the Children and

Families team. In so doing Weber's *domination* and *bureaucracy* have been useful in analysing professionals control over information and their compliance to the procedures related. The way I use Weber's ideas is extended in emphasising how the *key people* situated in those bureaucracies exercise power to share information and how such power is embedded in these professionals day-to-day work and in their own organisational procedures of processing information (see Buchanan and Badham, 2008).

4.5. Conclusion

This chapter has examined the processes of making information which begins in professionals' accounts of children and young people in the context of referral to multi-agency meetings. The chapter has begun to answer my first research question regarding what inter-agency working looks like within the institutional relations of GIRFEC implementation. The relationship between staff/professionals in schools and the Children and Families team is organised around information sharing. The sharing of information takes into account organisational procedures within schools and the Children and Families team and involves professional judgement and the use of computer database systems.

This chapter shows the ways in which information about children and young people, as discussed in Locality Forum meetings, is attained, stored and shared. Key people who enabled this information processes were identified. They are: head teachers (for primary school), deputy head teachers and guidance teachers (for secondary school), administrative staff in the Children and Families team, the teacher who played the administrative role in the management of the Secondary School Locality Forum

meetings and the Children and Families Team Leaders and members (i.e. Family Support Workers and Education Welfare Officer). These key people played intersecting roles in the information process. The ways in which they processed information within their own *settings*, and their use of language when they met with professionals from other settings were different.

The chapter has also begun to answer my second research question, regarding what a Named Person does when they work with other professionals in implementing GIRFEC. GIRFEC policy documents, both at local and national level, support the idea of finding a common language, yet the language of wellbeing, as the basis of GIRFEC, is problematic. The UK Supreme Court decision against the information sharing provision of the Named Person scheme adds to the problem by judging the schemes threshold as too low for professionals to share information in order to safeguard children and young people. The significance of the Supreme Court's decision, for this research, is that it highlights the complex practicalities that are entailed in professionals carrying out the Named Person role.

Bearing in mind the Named Person role was not yet in place during the fieldwork phase of this research, identifying key people and how their work with information and with other professionals is organised, has provided clues that the Named Person function is not a one person task. This is discussed further in Chapter 6.

Morrison (1996) says, "information is power and sharing it symbolizes some ceding of autonomy" (p130). Key people's control over information reflects Weber's idea of power as domination and the way they processed information (e.g. recording, sharing) exemplifies bureaucracy as formal procedures (see Hearn, 2012). How key

people's work is inter-connected through procedures in Locality Forum meetings and information recording/sharing supports Foucault's idea of how power is dispersed and an "uncentred aspect of social relations" (Hearn, 2012, p210). Thus power is decentred and its operation can be seen not only in the formal procedures but also in the mundane and seemingly-informal routines of the key people. In applying the concept of *ruling relations* to reveal the interconnectedness of the key people's work, I connect with Foucault's idea of power to show how these professionals' routines of processing information are manifestations of power relations. As I have shown in this chapter, ICT has enhanced the power of filtering and administration, at times displacing personal and/or professional relations; power can be seen as working through the formal procedures of locality forums, which I will discuss further in the next chapter.

This chapter has addressed some of the challenges for inter-agency working as suggested in literature: inter-professional differences in practices and paradigms, and relationships between professionals. However, this chapter goes beyond the actions of professionals to shed light on how differing work procedures inside organisations affect the way professionals work together.

In explicating inter-agency working, I found how GIRFEC implementation is complex in practice. The next chapter aims to shed light on this complexity by revealing how the use of shared meetings and forms contributes to professionals 'working together'. Professionals have different underlying perspectives about children and young people (Anning et al., 2010). Studies on integrated services or partnership working often include this as a barrier for professionals when working together (e.g. Hudson, 2007). The next chapter will look at what happens when these

professionals work together, such as in the Locality Forum meetings, and the opportunities to be reflexive and explore the uncertainties that led them to work together with other professionals in the first place.

Chapter 5 – The Organisation of Professionals'

Working Together

5.1. Introduction

This chapter explores *ruling relations* in the organised ways in which information about children and young people was collected by professionals. This becomes apparent through the analysis of the function of meetings and the use of referral forms. As mentioned in Chapter 1, ruling relations are “relations that coordinate people’s activities across and beyond local sites of everyday experience” (Smith, 2001, p45). As such, ruling relations originate somewhere beyond what is able to be observed in a research setting. It assumes a top-down relation, in which frontline professionals are subject to the ruling power (of bureaucracy, for example).

However, I argue that there is an unintended implication of professionals explicating ruling relations in inter-agency working. The implication is the benefit of multi-agency meetings for professionals. The meetings are a space which allow them to talk about their uncertainties in their own knowledge and judgement, as well as to be reflexive about their practice. These are the areas that policy tends to overlook. At the points where the analysis of meetings and forms also relates to the Named Person role and service, this chapter also begins to address the question of what the Named Person does when professionals work together in implementing *Getting It Right For Every Child* (GIRFEC) and addresses debates around the Named Person policy.

This chapter’s analysis builds on the previous chapter that showed how database systems, texts and the ways information was collected and shared revealed the organised relations between two settings: the Schools and the Children and Families

team. Chapter 4 also found that, in relation to the use of databases and texts, participation in meetings and the sharing of information by means of forms before, during and after meetings involves professionals making judgements as they navigate the complexity of ruling relations. In this chapter, I argue that meetings and referral forms are formalisations of processes of collecting, sharing, storing, recording and acting on information. I also demonstrate the intended and unintended implications and opportunities of meetings for professionals. These processes are not neutral, but shaped by the power relations between promoted teachers and Children and Families team leaders as those professionals are connected through their work. As discussed in Chapter 4, the information formulation, recording and sharing are operationalising power: teachers decide what information to record (*rationalisation*); and administrative staff use ICT and database systems to record (and thus filter) information for the Locality Forum meetings (shaping *discourse* and undertaking surveillance). Such information processes increase depersonalisation of children and families: they become case files, dividing into categories, and certain information filtered out therefore.

As these professionals take part in meetings and use the forms, they participate in *ruling relations*. Power operates through gaining people's participation in these ruling procedures (see Smith, 2005). By examining professionals' engagement in the procedures of meetings and the use of forms, the chapter explicates how such ruling procedures may cause extra work for the teachers. As a whole, this chapter reveals what would otherwise be invisible implications of being involved in these processes for the professionals. They used meetings as the space to vent. Although this function is not mentioned in policy documents, my analysis identifies it as one of the informal

processes which also vital to the successful working together envisaged in the GIRFEC policy. In so doing, the chapter addresses the question of what working together looks like within the institutional relations of GIRFEC implementation.

This chapter shows what working together looks like through considering the case of Jimmy, discussed in Section 5.2 to Section 5.4. He was a secondary school pupil at Sisters High School. He was referred to the Secondary School Forum meeting at the school's Pupil Referral Group meeting. Jimmy was also discussed in an Early Intervention Group for Offending Children and Young People meeting. Through examining Jimmy's case, I also show how a complex case provides both challenges and opportunities for professionals to be reflexive and supportive of one another as they engaged in meetings.

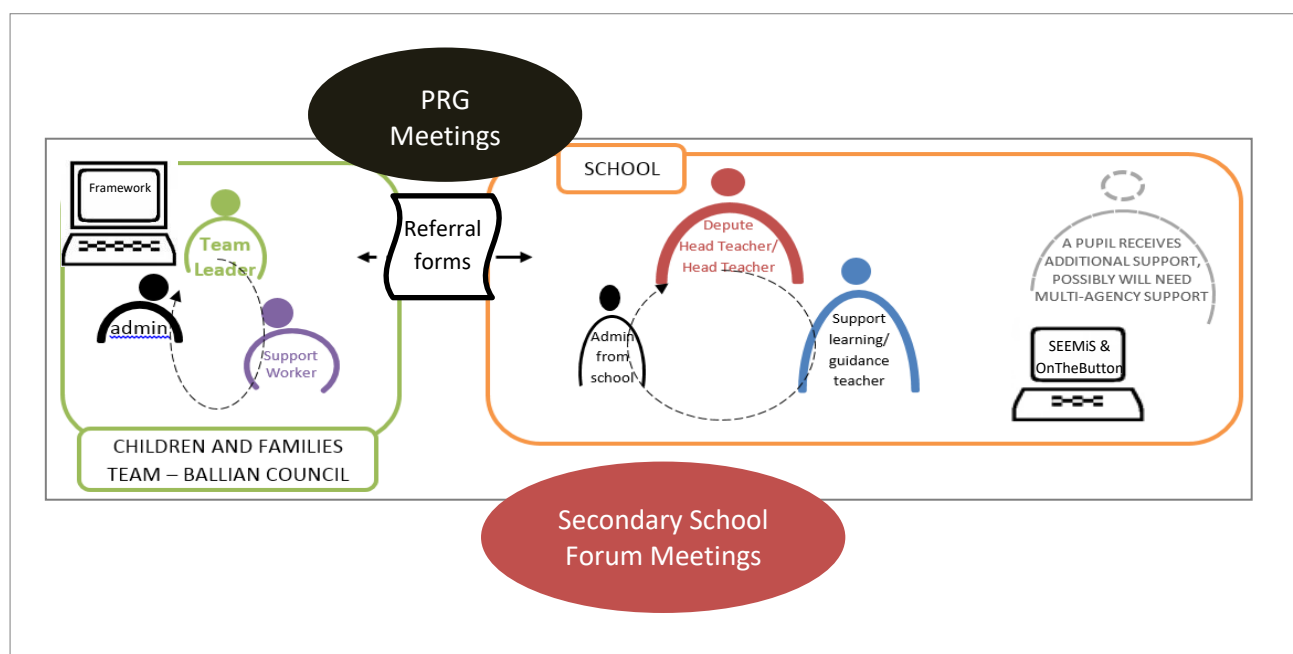


Figure 10. Multi-agency work through meetings and referral forms

The chapter starts with a brief description of the different kinds of meetings that will be discussed in this chapter. Section 5.2 begins by locating the Pupil Referral Group

meetings in the ‘early intervention’ literature. Following that, the section turns to how procedures of meetings explicate power relations between the Children and Families team and schools. This section ends with linking teachers’ work, in the context of inter-agency working, in the social work literature. Section 5.3 investigates how meetings become a safe space for professionals to vent their frustration and at the same time be reflexive about their own practice. The last section, Section 5.4, discusses forms as having performative function (Thompson, 2016), which means they can lead to action and also can be the lens to perceive how professionals’ work is organised (Smith, 1990a). At the end of each section, relevant debates around the Named Person policy are addressed. The previous chapter has discussed the roles of different professionals working in each setting (i.e. a school and the Children and Families team) when they process information about children and families. In processing the information, the two settings were connected through the process of referral, as seen in the figure below. The figure (Figure 10) is a visualization that represents what the meetings and the forms discussed in this chapter do in relation to the work processes that involved teachers and Children and Families Team members, and that made use of database systems both in the schools and in the Children and Families team – the Social Work division at Ballian Council.

5.2. Professionals’ Engagement in Meetings: key structures, early intervention and relationships

This section addresses the research question of what inter-agency working looks like by discussing what happened in the Pupil Referral Group (PRG) and Primary and Secondary Locality Forum meetings. Discussion in this chapter adds another layer to understanding how these two settings were connected by investigating what

happened in meetings and how the referral forms and the database systems were used.

As previously discussed in Chapter 4, the implementation of GIRFEC in Ballian involved the sharing of information at meetings. This chapter focusses on the Locality Forums' meetings and the Pupil Referral Group (PRG) meetings at a secondary school, Sisters High School. This section starts with a short description about the Locality Forums and PRG, before contextualising my analysis of meetings of the Forums and Group in relation to the early intervention literature. The section then discusses the complex processes in which professionals are engaged as they share information.

As critiques of the Named Person policy draw their arguments from social work discourse (e.g. Stoddart, 2015; Waiton, 2016), this section argues for the importance of understanding promoted teachers not as 'social workers', but as professionals in their own right, and also as employees of the Council. As such, teachers are nevertheless both subject to and engaging with the complex procedures of inter-agency working developed by the Council.

Reading Ballian Council's policy documents on inter-agency working in the context of GIRFEC implementation led me to the Locality Forums. This section draws heavily on my observations of the Forums' meetings, interviews and informal talks with professionals who attended Forums meetings as well as from reading two Ballian Council policy documents. I have mentioned in Chapter 4 that Ballian Council's Children and Families team are divided between four localities. There are two high schools in Snows locality. One of which is Sisters High School. Secondary

School Locality Forums are held in both high schools. The representative from the Children and Families team for the Locality Forum at Sisters High School is Amber, who is the Team Leader for Snows Locality and attends the Locality Forum meetings of both schools.

Ballian's framework for implementing GIRFEC outlines the Forums as *key structures* that work as a threshold between Stage 2 and Stage 3 of the staged system of intervention, a system for all agencies working with children in Ballian. The system has three stages. Stage 1 is for universal services, such as health and education, which are available to all children and young people. It is a single-agency approach, such as the school service. Stage 2 refers to universal service with additional support. It is targeted support within universal services such as, additional support for learning for a pupil. The PRG meetings are part of the Stage 2 strategy. Stage 3 is integrated support provided by more than one agency, as when there is multi-agency support for children going on to the child protection register, for example.

The Locality Forum is one of the 'key structures' for identifying children and young people who have been receiving additional support from a single agency (at Stage 2) but may need multi-agency support (Ballian, 2010, 2015). The Forum functioned through meetings. In describing the Locality Forums, the Ballian guide (2015) does not say meetings need to be conducted (nor forms to be distributed). However, the guide mentions that the criteria for allocating support to children and young people need to be 'discussed at the Locality Forums'. The guide has the capacity to coordinate professionals' actions as they engage in discursive practice through discussions in the Locality Forum meetings) (see Hearn, 2012). Throughout my

observations at the Forums' meetings and subsequent interviews with their members, many informants referred to a Forum's meeting simply as the 'forum'. To avoid confusion, this chapter uses the word 'meeting' to refer to the Forum's meetings.

The Secondary School Locality Forum fits the profile of a multi-agency panel, one of the models of multi-agency work (Walker, 2008). Members of the Forum represent a mix of agencies, they remain employed by their home agencies and they share information, although some maintain the use of their distinct IT system (Walker, 2008, p15-16). However, literature on inter-agency working has noted some of the difficulties of having different agencies in a multi-agency setting such as the Forum. They include clashes of culture (Stradling and Alexander, 2012), challenges to professional identity (Moran et al., 2007) and different administrative and IT systems (NSPCC and SCIE, 2016). My focus here is on some of the challenges faced by teachers in multi-agency working, but also the benefits of professionals working together.

The Secondary School Locality Forum and School Leaving Forum were locality forums that secondary schools organised and hosted. Eleanor, the Deputy Head Teacher at Sisters High School, explained that these forums were multi-agency, as agencies from areas such as health, education, the community police were working alongside education as partners. The Primary School Locality Forum, in contrast, was organised by the Council's Children and Families Team Leaders, and the Forum's meetings were held at the Council's Social Work division office. Under GIRFEC these forums were expected to develop a single plan for a pupil referred to the forums (Ballian Council, 2013). GIRFEC was introduced as a way forward for children's services to move from working in silos to working in partnership

(Stradling and Alexander, 2012). But partnership working in Scotland's children services is not new. Before GIRFEC, there had been initiatives, such as the Child Protection Reform Programme launched in 2003 (Vincent et al., 2010) and Integrated Children's Services since 1998 (Grek et al., 2009), where children's services professionals were working together. In fact, the GIRFEC pathfinder project in Highland Council was built on the Council's integrated children services approach (Stradling and Alexander, 2012).

Another group whose meetings I observed was the Pupil Referral Group (PRG) at Sisters High School. I was invited to observe the PRG meeting because it functions as a gatekeeper for the subsequent Secondary School Locality Forum. Although the meetings were based in schools and did not include as wide a range of agencies as the Locality Forum, the Children and Families team leaders attended them. The following excerpt is an explanation that Eleanor, Deputy Head Teacher at Sisters High School, gave about what a PRG meeting is and its relation to the Secondary School Forum:

Eleanor:We also have....I know you've been coming along and attending Secondary School Forum ...ehm...but we also have, alternate weeks, we have what we call a pupil referral group meeting. Some other schools called it pupil concern group meeting. So these will be locally arranged within each school setting, but in our school what we do is almost like gatekeeping for the Secondary School Forum. That there's where the young person would be raised first with the concerns, ehm...at that stage they might be supported just through the universal support or they might have some other kind of support but we'll look to see what support they might require, if we can just do that within school, or if we need to make a referral somewhere and if we need to

refer to Secondary School [Locality] Forum for, I suppose, higher intervention.

Harla: So it's like screening?

Eleanor: Yeah, it's a bit like a screening group yeah

Harla: Okay

(Eleanor, Sisters High School Deputy Head Teacher, Interview)

In the excerpt, Eleanor mentions that the function of the PRG meeting at Sisters High School is to act as a *gatekeeping* for the Locality Forum (i.e. the Secondary School Locality Forum). She then explains the meeting is a space for raising concerns about pupils who may have received additional support from a universal service and looking at other kinds of support the pupils might need. These characteristics echo Ballian's definition of Stage 2 intervention as additional targeted support within a single, universal, service. However, the PRG meeting is also located in the early intervention context, as the next section discusses.

5.2.1. 'Intervening Early': how meetings address the early intervention discourse

The Pupil Referral Group (PRG) discussion was seen as a strategy for early intervention. Eleanor explained that PRG meetings considered additional supports to universal service, that is, the support provided to children through the school. Indeed, Helen (Children and Families Team Leader) said in our interview that the PRG meetings were seen as crucial for solving cases early. In this respect, the purpose of the PRG meetings reflects the notion that GIRFEC is "founded on the principles of early intervention" (Scottish Government, 2008, p8). In the following excerpt, the depute head teacher Eleanor reflects on what early intervention means for the school.

She explains why having the PRG and Secondary School Forum are helpful in preventing a pupil's situation becoming a crisis:

Eleanor: As I said...the benefits are I think it's really good that it's there because otherwise you would just be contacting these partners on an ad hoc basis and saying 'oh we need this and we need that' and I feel that we would only be... Just because of everything else getting in the way, we'd probably only be making that contact when we need something, and that's often at the point of crisis whereas the PRG and the Secondary School [Forum] it's actually about trying to prevent getting into that crisis. So that you're talking and you're saying 'okay, we can see attendance is down at that level, it's low, behaviour is at risk of exclusion, let's put something in place now'. Whereas if you didn't have the system, you know, it could just be all is reacting, all is crisis-led.

(Eleanor, Sisters High School Deputy Head Teacher, Interview)

The system here refers to procedures surrounding the running of PRG and the Forum. As well as emphasising the value of engaging with other agencies to prevent crisis, Eleanor also provides a clue to understand the school procedures underlying this engagement and the principle of early intervention that the PRG represents.

Eleanor suggests that information held by the school about a pupil, such as records of attendance and behaviour, trigger the system to work. Surveillance is evident through such recording, and the power of surveillance to then lead to broader and more intensive professional attention and intervention exemplified.

The concept of early intervention is subject to different interpretations. As Pithouse (2008) and other scholars (e.g. Aldgate et al., 2006) argue, professionals' understanding of early intervention is influenced by their construction of childhood, understanding of child development, and services they deliver. From the perspective

of those working in schools, referral to the PRG follows earlier intervention through the school's support and disciplinary processes. I argue that early intervention incorporates the support offered to children within schools prior to their referral to the PRGs. Eleanor noted that the PRG meeting was a step toward early intervention that enables professionals to share their experience from working with the families of pupils (see Davis and Smith, 2012) with each other. However, the process that led to raising concerns about a particular pupil was integral to the existing disciplinary procedures in school. Thus, the concerns were not new to the guidance teacher, the support for learning teacher and Eleanor who all attended the PRG meeting I observed. It is important to recognise that the schools have first tried to intervene with cases before they are brought to PRG meetings but found no change in pupils' behaviour. It was the 'escalation or no progress' in pupils' behaviour that would trigger their referral to a PRG meeting and an effort to identify further sources of support for them. When the PRG agree a case needs wider discussion with other professionals, the case would be referred to the Locality Forum (i.e. Primary or Secondary School Forum) meetings. I argue that such a process of carrying through a case from school to the PRG to the Locality Forum shows that the referral process should be understood as a continuation of early intervention already initiated within the school setting.

It is important to note the roles of the head teacher and guidance teachers in PRGs, particularly as the Council focus on Stage 2 in their Named Person implementation strategy. In light of the Named Person provision, Ballian's plan was to focus on early intervention in which teachers in a promoted post would be able to read [only] the database system, *Frameworki*. Frameworki could only be populated by the Children

and Families team and others in the Social Work division of the Council who worked with the family. The Children and Families Team Leaders would attend the PRG meetings and their role was considered important at Stage 2 of intervention. This was confirmed by Henry from Ballian's Education division during GIRFEC training and by Helen, a Children and Families Team Leader. The Team Leaders' role will be particularly important in the implementation of the Named Person policy because they have the responsibility to ensure the procedures of Ballian's stages of intervention are in place. So this focus on early intervention suggests two changes for the ways in which the teachers work with Children and Families Team Leaders in the future. First, both sides will be able to know certain information in *Frameworki* and therefore simplify the process of seeking information on the teachers' part. Second, teachers will work more closely with Children and Families Team Leaders in PRG meetings to ensure their scrutiny of cases is in accordance with Ballian's stages of intervention.

5.2.2. Processing information formally: how procedures of meetings reflect power relations between the Children and Families team and the school

The case of Jimmy, mentioned in the introduction, illustrates the complex interactions and the uneven flow of information characteristic of a PRG meeting. Jimmy is a pupil at Sisters High School who was referred to the Secondary School Forum at a PRG meeting. The discussion involved an Education Welfare Officer (Violet, who is part of the Children and Families team), an Educational Psychologist (Fonda), a Council staff member from the Lifelong Learning and Employability team (Hana), the school's Pupil Support for Learning Teacher (Diane) and the school's Careers Advisor (Sally). The following is my fieldnote while observing the meeting:

In February 2015 I attended a Pupil Referral Group (PRG) meeting at Sisters High School. Violet was the Education Welfare Officer who attended the meeting in place of Amber (Children and Families Team Leader of Snows locality). She read from her notes that Jimmy had been allocated a family support worker. However, because he lived in Bridges locality, the allocated support worker was based in the Children and Families locality team at Bridges. Violet continued by saying she had not seen an update from Jimmy's family support worker on *Frameworki*. Violet suggested the school contact Morag (Bridges locality's team leader) and her team. Diane, the school Pupil Support for Learning Teacher who led the meeting, nodded in agreement. Hana, Ballian's Lifelong Learning and Employability staff member, asked what the boy had done. While trying to find the Police Report, Violet said "stealing in a shop". Violet added that she found out about the case from the report that the Police sent to the Children and Families team in January, but the incident took place in November (3 months before). Fonda (Educational Psychologist) asked about information regarding the family, to which Diane replied "not much (known)" but "his behavior is unusual". Then Fonda suggested she should come to the multiagency meeting with Family Support team when they met with the parents. The meeting referred Jimmy for a discussion in the next Secondary School Forum. At this point somebody raised the question of how to get parental consent to discuss the boy in the forum, at which Violet mentioned there were forms for that and I noticed most of them looked as if they were aware of that. However, regarding the PRG, Diane and Violet agreed that oral consent should be sufficient. Diane then summarised "our action is to ask Morag". Sally (Careers Advisor) added that because of the boy's age, he would be in School Leaving Forum so she would be there.

(Pupil Referral Group, Fieldnotes)

I later learned that it was not the first time that Jimmy was discussed in a PRG meeting. The meeting brought together some professionals who had or would have

face-to-face contact with the boy and his family and others who interfaced with collected information in Framework. Thus, the function of the meeting also relies on the use of information and communication technology (ICT) and *key people's* information. For example, the reference to a police report prompted the action point for the Educational Psychologist to meet with the family and the family support worker. The boy's place of residence required a second action point for the school to contact another Children and Families team member. Thus, action was facilitated but involved gathering further information from agencies concerned with Jimmy's case but not present at the meeting. The case of Jimmy shows how complex the procedures required to support partnership working could be but, also, that having the people knowledgeable about Jimmy present makes actions more targeted. Jimmy's case shows that power is initially dispersed, in that key information is known to a range of professionals (Buchanan and Badham, 2008; Smith, 1990). Partnership working relies on bringing such information together: assisted by the bureaucratic *rationalisation* conceptualised by Weber (see chapter 2).

In the previous chapter I talked about how the relationship between schools and the Children and Families team was organised through the process of referral and sharing information that involved using database systems. Head or Guidance Teachers engaged with other professionals in order to get information about their pupils that was stored elsewhere, for example, in the Council's social work database system, *Frameworki*. In the era of growing attention to how information about children and their families are assessed and stored (Stoddart, 2015), professionals working with children and families cannot escape computer interfaces, while having face-to-face interaction with service users (see Munro, 2005; Thompson, 2016).

Such tasks may be onerous for the professionals and this may impede the early identification that is actually the benefit of having professionals engaging in face-to-face partnership working (see Davis and Smith, 2012; Hall and White, 2005).

In line with the policy intention of GIRFEC (see Scottish Government, 2014b), the PRG and Secondary School Locality Forum facilitates, as Eleanor explained and hoped for, the engagement of different actors that lead to supportive action points for children and families to prevent children slipping into crisis. Although the PRG does not include a large number of agencies, it does involve engagement between a school and Children and Families team. A PRG meeting is a process that reflects the relationship the school has with the Children and Families team. It is worth looking more closely at the relationship because the development planning of the Named Person service in Ballian focusses on early intervention through the PRGs, and there is a possibility that the multi-agency Secondary School Locality Forum and Primary School Locality Forum will cease to exist.

The PRG meeting was a moment of interaction that connected the work of professionals, both present and absent. Although the PRG was not considered a multi-agency group in Ballian's policy document (Ballian Council, 2010, 2015), the purpose of the meetings was met through bringing together information from different systems. Information about Jimmy's family was held at the Council, collected by the locality team for Bridges, where Jimmy lived, and held at the Council, stored in *Frameworki*. Information about Jimmy's behaviour in school, such as his attendance and notes on disciplinary actions, was collected by Eleanor and her colleagues and stored in 'OnTheButton'. In sharing and discussing information from the two settings, professionals who attended the meeting were participating in the

formalisation and exchange of information processes (see Thompson, 2016). In addition to the contribution of information, the contribution of Violet (the Education Welfare Officer), as a representative of Children and Families team, was crucial in guiding the representatives from the school through the necessary procedures through which action could be taken. Violet clarified the consent seeking process, confirmed that it was appropriate to refer the case to the locality forum, and explained the way things work in her team with regards to information about family support. Rather than being neutral, the procedures corresponded to either policies or the organisational system of each setting, the Sisters High School or the Children and Families team. The Children and Families team had the responsibility for ensuring the consent seeking processes and criteria for cases to be discussed at the forum reflected the way Ballian interpreted GIRFEC, as the Pupil Referral Group and the Forum were part of the key structure in Ballian's GIRFEC implementation framework (Ballian Council, 2015).

The management of procedures by Violet also enacted the power relations between the two settings. The context in which certain information is obtained by certain agencies shows how power relations are at play in such information processes. I am focussing on power that connects people and moves information, and so it is worthwhile to see how it works in a multi-agency meeting. Literature on inter-agency working has also considered that power imbalances persist in partnership working and can constrain the roles available to the different partners working together (e.g. Davis and Smith, 2012; Byles, 1984). Power relations between the Children and Families team and the school were materialised in the way Violet ensured the correct consent seeking procedure and in the way the school was dependent on her for

information only accessible to the Children and Families team. This is a challenge in terms of the School's role, and more precisely the role of Eleanor, the Deputy Head Teacher, as the head of the Forum. In this particular case of sharing of information, common practice in multi-agency work, the information that Children and Families team held were more sought in the process than information from other agencies. This became more obvious to me as I observed Jimmy's case being discussed in meetings where information from the police, for example, had been passed to the Children and Families team. In such ways, power relations between partners are embedded in the formal procedure of the meeting as information is being shared. This inequality between different agencies and professionals in control over information was observable here and thus become one of the challenges of inter-agency working. Following Morrison's (1996) idea that "information is power and sharing it symbolizes some ceding of autonomy" (p130), key people's control over information reflects Weber's idea of power as domination and of *bureaucracy* as it has the tendency to preserve status and power by preserving control of knowledge (Weber, 2009, p233).

Working together is often offered as a solution to the problem of bureaucratic power (Glasby and Dickinson, 2014). However, working with other agencies does not eliminate power relations between agencies. I have discussed how power is related to the processes of information sharing, which include the database system. Nevertheless, the power associated with responsibility is intended to be productive, as the following excerpt suggests:

Harla: You mentioned that because the school doesn't have access to Framework, the information you get about the families is from children and

families team, so is it only when they're in the Secondary School forum you'd get information?

Eleanor: You could, you could get it [information]. If you had a concern about someone, particularly if they had already been through the PRG and Secondary School Forum and would tend to be, not so much me, but the key person [likely to be the guidance teacher] who work with that young person.

(Eleanor, Sisters High School Deputy Head Teacher, Interview)

Eleanor, the Deputy Head Teacher at Sisters High School, notes that her school's engagement with the Children and Families team in the PRG and Secondary School Locality Forum meetings enable her colleagues to have contacts with the Children and Families team members. Engaging in the meetings then is part of formal procedures that allow relationships to take place outside the meetings. Eleanor's example shows power can be productive: the Locality Forum meeting as a ruling procedure enables the professionals to have relationships outside the formal setting.

I am concluding that when the promoted teachers are engaging in multi-agency relationship at meetings and other information exchange processes, such as making a phone call, looking at the database system, they are engaging in *ruling relations*. However, their participation in the ruling relations also shows that power relations are unstable, which confirms Foucault's idea of power (see Buchanan and Badham, 2008 and discussions in chapter 2). What the teachers were doing – and what other professionals were doing in response – represent lived experience of working together as GIRFEC aspired and as reflected in Ballian's GIRFEC implementation framework. Their undertakings highlight professionals' relations to policy and

structure which shape the professionals' work. In those relationships, power is at play as information was dispersed and the Children and Families team played an important role in the Pupil Referral Group meetings, before cases being brought to the Secondary School Locality Forum.

5.2.3. Teachers are doing elements of 'social work'

Teachers who attend Locality Forum meetings are entangled in complex procedures shaped by the culture, processes and legal requirements of social service agencies. Particularly in the context of inter-agency working in Ballian, the teachers were engaging in complex GIRFEC related procedures set out by the Council's Social Work division. While 'promoted teachers' are not social workers, fulfilling their duty of care to their pupils involves the work of obtaining information from, and working with, other professionals. Engaging with referral processes and formal meetings requires them to negotiate some of the institutional and procedural terrain of social work (Thompson, 2016).

Teachers are not social workers. However, I argue that the nature of the teachers' role as part of universal service, as I have shown above, inevitably means they address some aspects of social work. In this sense, the teachers are already doing what is expected of them as a Named Person in the GIRFEC policy documents (Scotland Government, 2008). It is not an entirely new role. The expectation for universal service professionals to identify welfare concerns early has also been proposed in social work reviews (see Munro, 2010, 2011). Without any intention to minimise either the role of social workers or teachers, or to suggest they are equivalent, a comparison between teachers who engaged in a multi-agency setting and social workers is useful here. Important aspects of social working involve

dealing with information, both through interaction with service users and the recording, storing and sharing of information that includes ICT (see Prince, 1996; Munro, 2005). These aspects are also part of the role of teachers who participate in the partnership working I observed. Eleanor and her colleagues were in contact with Jimmy, they were frontline practitioners who dealt with Jimmy's behaviours at school. They also had the information about, and made the referrals for, his education interventions.

In addition, social workers deal with 'bureaucracy and managerial and governance of the child protection system' (de Montigny, 1995). So, too, do the teachers whose roles I have analysed here. In Jimmy's case, Eleanor and her colleagues were engaging in the procedures of the PRGs and Locality Forum meetings as they made referrals for Jimmy. Moreover, this referral system was bureaucratic and its management involved professionals from the Children and Families team, making the teachers' role in this context challenging. The privilege of access to information that social workers have is not granted to Eleanor and her colleagues, which is why they need to be in close contact with the Children and Families team. Such relationships between the school's staff and the Children and Families team show how *ruling relations* operate. The bureaucracy around the referral system and information recording shaped the way these professionals worked together to share information about Jimmy.

Opponents of the Named Person scheme tend to see such teachers' engagement with the information processes as something that embodies state surveillance (see Stoddart, 2015), interferes with parental rights, and has teachers assume the position of a 'state guardian' (see Waiton, 2016). Such critiques tend to overlook the

complexity around the professionals' work. There are information sharing procedures that bind these professionals to their organisations' systems as I have shown in this chapter. This is not to say professionals cannot make mistakes. Professionals may make mistakes which can contribute to dire consequences, as with the case of Caleb Ness in Scotland¹⁸. The case's inquiry report attributes the failure of some professionals to share information to a lack of knowledge about the relevant guidance on sharing confidential information in a child protection context (O'Brien et al., 2003). Within an organisation where training on information sharing are given and a set of procedures are in place, professionals who make use of their knowledge and judgement appropriately do bring in appropriate support and gain trust from children and families. In the context of GIRFEC, for example, working with other professionals and using tools, such as 'my world triangle' and 'resilience matrix', have been found to improve professionals' own work (Stradling et al., 2009).

The Named Person's role is going to be fulfilled by professionals who are knowledgeable, skilled, and accountable to the institution which employs them; whether the local authority for teachers or the health board for health visitors. As such, those fulfilling the role of Named Person are part of a children's services system practising a multi-agency approach which facilitates collective professional judgement of the need for greater support for the children for whom they are responsible. Within that multi-agency relationship, Named Person professionals will engage in complex procedures which bring challenges but also support their own work.

¹⁸ Caleb Ness was born on 30 July 2001 and died eleven weeks later on 18 October 2001. The baby's father, Alexander Ness, pled guilty to culpable homicide and was sentenced in March 2003 to eleven years imprisonment (The City of Edinburgh Council, 2003, p1).

This section has shown that when teachers feel the need for more information, they engage in *ruling relations*. Such procedures may cause extra work for the teachers attending the meetings. Nevertheless, their engagement brings them closer to information they need when dealing with the pupils they have referred to the PRG and Locality Forums. As frontline workers, the service they provide in school was complemented with inter-agency work that the PRGs and Forums facilitated. In their relationship with other professionals, particularly with Children and Families team, power was at play as they engaged in sharing information and interacted in the meetings. This must be acknowledged because in the Named Person policy, promoted teachers are assumed to have power to share information which they do not have. Their relationship with information is complex as the discussion above showed. While their relationship with the pupils is central to their role as teachers, the case of Jimmy illustrates that teachers must also manage the potential uncertainty around information sharing, procedural outcomes and outcomes of intervention for the pupil. The same procedures which could bring them closer to information might sustain uncertainty for teachers. As noted, Jimmy's case was held open for the Secondary School Locality Forum beyond the end of my period in the field, into the 2015/16 academic year.

This section has discussed certain aspects of power in the *ruling relations* of inter-agency working. The bureaucracy around the referral system and information recording shaped the way professionals worked together. The operation of *ruling relations* relies on key people's information in the context of PRG and Locality Forum meetings. This reliance is one of the challenges of inter-agency working.

The Named Person service has been criticised as potentially ‘interfering’ with family lives (Mellon, 2015), but this section has suggested the situation of the future Named Person in relation to other professionals and service users is complex. In the next chapter, I will elaborate more on the implications of the complex procedures and power relations between schools and the Children and Families team to the role and service of the Named Person.

5.3. ‘It is ok to be uncertain’: how meetings are perceived as supportive spaces for professionals

This section further considers the benefits and frustrations of having a multi-agency meeting. The previous section began to discuss why applying a *reflexive* approach which involves professionals reflecting on their practice and on the assumptions and judgements influencing it in Locality Forums’ meetings, would be useful but difficult. An important theme in this section is how the professionals perceived the Locality Forums as a ‘safety valve’. As cases become increasingly complicated, reflexivity does not come as easily to the professionals.

On my first day observing a Secondary School Locality Forum, the Children and Families Locality Team Leader, Amber, gave me a two-page information sheet explaining that the Forum meetings were intended to be a place to *meet* and *discuss* pupils who were referred to the Forum. Olga, the Principal Teacher for Behaviour Support at Robin locality, emphasised the importance of discussion in Forum meetings and the referral process:

Olga: If it’s something more complex, we advise [head teachers] to refer to the Primary School Locality Forum so we can have richer discussion, have all

the services involved and can get a lot more information for what's best for the child, family and for the school. I think....yeah it's safe to say that the majority of the referrals [for behaviour support in primary schools] come from the forum.

(Olga, Principal Teacher for Behaviour Support at Robin locality, Interview)

This excerpt refers to activities beyond what is observable at meetings, such as the referral process and information sharing, discussed in the previous chapter.

Obtaining such additional information is considered a virtue of the Locality Forums, as well as an important aspect of the role of Named Person (see Scottish Government, 2012a). However, information about children and families is not static, and the assumption that further pieces of information will result in a holistic picture of the child/family can lead to frustration over different judgements on the importance of a piece of information (Thompson, 2016). A complex case requires a more reflexive approach (Lawler and Bilson, 2010; Pithouse, 2008).

5.3.1. Adopting a reflexive approach

Complex procedures, in combination with a complex case, pose challenges for professionals when applying a reflexive approach. A professional who adopts such an approach develops an awareness of his or her practice, which includes reflecting on the assumptions shaping their own judgement. A reflexive approach has also been proposed for multi-professional contexts as a strategy for tackling the top-down nature of children's services (Davis and Smith, 2012). In Jimmy's case, this approach was evident as professionals shared information and expertise in the PRG meeting. However, as Violet ensured the consent-seeking procedures and Jimmy's referral to the Locality Forum were 'correctly' executed, such reflexivity in an inter-agency

setting should be understood in relation to the complex procedures in which the professionals are participating.

In the UK, there is a tendency to respond to the tragedy of child abuse or a child's death with a controlled, top-down investigation of social work practice. The Laming inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié¹⁹ found evidence of poor performance by the social work team who had worked with Victoria and her guardians. On the basis of the inquiry's recommendations, policies around social work have since been intended to make social workers' work processes more accountable (e.g. Munro, 2005; Taylor and White, 2006). Such policies are based in the realm of social work, but, because early intervention is becoming increasingly important in both specialised and universal services (see Pithouse, 2008), they have consequences for partnership working between education, health and social work. The above is an example of power being pervasive. As social work policies extend into partnership working with education and health, as identified in this thesis, the burgeoning use of ICT is a vehicle for this spreading power. Consequently, spaces are reduced for professional reflexivity and judgement.

Multi-agency working enabled engagement of a range of different actors and led to supportive action points for children by not leaving a single agency to make decisions in a complex case (Davis and Smith, 2012). The Locality Forum meeting in Ballian has the potential for a reflexive approach in the way school teachers discuss pupils with other professionals. The space allows teachers to think about the support

¹⁹ Victoria Climbié was an eight-year-old girl who was brutally murdered by her great aunt and her partner on the 25th of February 2000 in England. The case was highly publicised and an inquiry into the case resulted in recommendations that have created a climate of controlling bureaucracy for social workers (Thompson, 2016).

they provide in relation to support provided by other services and reflection on judgements. Jimmy's case involved data provided by both the school and the Children and Families' team, as well as police reports which came through the Children and Families' system. A reflexive approach that allows professionals to take time in dealing with emotions and uncertainties may also facilitate the development of their judgement (Taylor and White, 2006).

Jimmy's case moved from the PRG to the Locality Forum because there was a police report, which made the case eligible for discussion in the Forum's meeting. In the meeting, the discussion of possible strategies and the negotiation of the different roles members would play in the provision of support for the pupil encouraged supportive and productive engagement between professionals. While the Children and Families Team Leader, Amber, ensured procedural requirements were met, Eleanor, the Deputy Head Teacher, gave importance to the communication she had had with the pupil's grandmother and mother, acknowledging their voices in the situation. Thus, a reflexive approach and supportive interaction were potentially key elements for how a discussion in the Forum's meeting could benefit the school and their service users.

Reflexivity is supported when inter-agency working places emphasis on human relationships over organisational structure, an emphasis essential to success (Bruner, 1991). A participatory approach that is based on trust and good relationships between service providers and service users is also proposed to counter bureaucratic problems. This approach suggests that professionals should listen more to service users, the people they see on a daily basis (Davis and Smith, 2012). It was noted in the case of Victoria Climbié that "no professional engaged her in any significant

conversation” (Munro, 2005, p379). There is a danger that the complex procedures of PRG and Locality Forum meetings, alongside ICT procedures, may dominate professionals’ work and take them away from working directly with service users. For example, Jimmy was diagnosed with ADHD at the end of S1, but he had problems keeping to his medication. My conversation with Eleanor about Jimmy did not address the relationship between his diagnoses and the disciplinary problems which kept showing up in the PRG and Locality Forum meetings. There are a number of reasons the experience of ADHD might be linked to behaviour which come up for discussion in such meetings, and they include a combination of social and individual factors (Stead and Lloyd, 2008). Thus in the bureaucratic setting of PRG and Locality Forum meetings, Weber’s warning of depersonalisation is relevant (see Clegg, 1994).

I have shown that Locality Forum meetings act as a constructive space for sharing professionals’ knowledge about cases and their own skills (Davis and Smith, 2012). However, the absence or lack of participation of one agency may impair the capacity for the forum’s meeting to be such a constructive space and may limit their ability to be reflexive. For example, one family support worker raised the issue of a recurrent gap in expertise resulting from the absence of a representative from mental health services at Forum meetings. I took notes after our conversation and gained his consent retrospectively in order to use this excerpt in the thesis:

After attending a Secondary School Locality Forum meeting at Sisters High School, Hugh (family support worker in Amber’s team) tells me that health should be in the meeting. Hugh says that in all meetings he attended, health has always been the weaker link. I ask ‘who do you mean by health?’ He goes on to speak about Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and

uses an example from the meeting we just had. One pupil had stopped taking his medicines for ADHD. CAMHS didn't come to the meeting but the staff sent a note suggesting they couldn't find information about the pupils that were discussed in the meeting. Hugh says it is the boy's right to not take his medicine but, if CAMHS were there, they could give us advice on the impact of not taking the medicines and how to educate or give advice to the boy so he wants to take his medicine again. I feel, at least for Hugh, CAMHS' presence and sharing of professional expertise is desirable even when the cases that are discussed do not involve the service directly.

(after Secondary School Locality Forum meeting, Informal Talk)

Thus, the presence of professionals in meetings is about more than the provision of case information. It is also about bringing together professional's power over information, which had until then been dispersed. Hugh expected the presence of a representative of CAMHS so that their expertise could feed into knowledge from which all those present could draw, better supporting the young person. Some respondents argued that the absence of certain professionals could result in additional work for those present, as the following comments from Eleanor indicate:

Eleanor: But if, for whatever reason, the organisation is not represented at the meeting, you can feel sometimes that you're doing all of this discussion and then you still have to go and then contact the person, whereas, if they just had been there, they could deal with that at that time. That's frustrating. Sometimes it feels as though it's the school that's driving things...and that can be frustrating.

(Eleanor, Sisters High School Deputy Head Teacher, Interview)

Eleanor considers the extra work resulting from the absence of other professionals as detrimental to the sense of partnership. It can be frustrating for Eleanor and other professionals who chair such meetings.

One other aspect of ‘partnership working’ is related to relationships with the children and parents/carers discussed in the meetings. For example, during my observations of PRG and Locality Forum meetings, I noted the physical absence of children and carers. Jimmy and his family were not present in the meetings I observed. Instead, what was presented in the meetings was an account of Jimmy’s behaviour and family conditions.

My research is not about the involvement of children and families in the processes of inter-agency working, particularly as they were not present physically at the Locality Forums that were at the centre of the research fieldwork (see section 3.4.1 Entry Point). However, I recognise that the issue of children and parents involvement in such meetings has been addressed in other studies about inter-agency working. For example, Lloyd and colleagues (2001) in their study about school-based inter-agency meetings found that children’s and parents’ involvement in decision making process could mean they physically attend the meetings or were informed and involved outside the meetings. Most children and their parents/carers who attended the meetings valued their participation even though sometimes they found the meetings overwhelming. Other children and parents, however, preferred not to attend meetings and had found them uncomfortable; thus some of these children and parents preferred to be informed and involved outside the meetings. Similar findings were found in studies by Buckley and colleagues (2011) on service users’ (young people and parents/guardian) involvement in child protection meetings.

The objectification of children and young people in the context of referral to multi-agency meetings, as discussed in the previous chapter, must be a reminder that the voices of children, service users, are often not taken into consideration in such

policies. This has implications for children's rights, some of which echo concerns raised during the consultation for the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. Concerns were expressed that professionals may share information about a young person without the young person's consent, and that too much reliance on professionals' judgement is counter-productive to partnership working (see Scottish Parliament, 2013). Such implications are worthy of mention because the UK Supreme Court decision in July, 2016 found the procedure for consent-seeking by a Named Person in order to pass on information insufficient (*The Christian Institute and others v The Lord Advocate* [2016] UKSC 51). The decision was also made on the basis of potential interference with family rights. However, as explained in prior chapters, discussion of this issue falls outside the scope of this thesis where the focus has been on the policy processes in which children's problems are objectified as cases. On the other hand, when considering the benefits to professionals of multi-agency meetings, the absence of service users was noted as contributing to the open, reflexive discussion valued by professionals working together under GIRFEC. I discuss the benefits of this aspect of meetings in the next section.

5.3.2. Creating a multi-agency meeting as a 'safety valve' for professionals

The Locality Forums are *key structures* (Ballian Council, 2010, 2015) in that their purpose is to prevent children from 'slipping through the cracks' of informal and formal care provision into problems which jeopardise their wellbeing and schooling. In this way, the meetings are intended to provide a 'safety net'. This is the rhetoric of the GIRFEC national policy framework and local Ballian's GIRFEC framework (see Ballian Council, 2013). This was confirmed during my observation of a Primary School Locality Forum meeting in the Robin locality. The meeting ended with the

Forum's annual evaluation, during which Maureen, the Primary School Head Teacher, spoke of preventing children from being unintentionally neglected or ignored:

Maureen (Primary School Head Teacher) says the forum [...] is helping her identify pupils who otherwise will slip through [the cracks], and getting information that has not been picked up by her school. Janette (community mental health worker) concurs by saying that the forum is a place to share expertise and that she has become familiar with others around the table. Maureen says that comes out of having good relationships. Naomi (School Nurse Team Leader) adds that in the forum she can speak frankly in discussing the cases as opposed to having families in the forum. I see agreeable nods from the others as she says this.

(Primary School Locality Forum meeting, Fieldnotes)

The excerpt shows how the Forum is perceived as a place for sharing and gaining information, but is also a comfortable place in which to share one's opinion and judgement. It is a constructive space in which communication manifests the relationship among members (Davis and Smith, 2012). In such a space, moment by moment productions of power were observable, between representatives of different agencies as they sought to fulfil their roles within their own organisation and in the Locality Forum meeting. Such power was expressed horizontally – across professional peers – rather than being expressed vertically – across line management structures. As Foucault noted, power can be seen as decentred, operating through social relations (see chapter 2).

The meetings are set up for a specific purpose, such as preventing the escalation of a case, but this discussion shows professionals making sense of other dimensions of

the meetings for themselves, such as the link between good relationships and open, fruitful discussion. Naomi's comment, that she can speak frankly, points to the function of meetings not only as a safety net for children who need support, but also as a 'safety valve' to support those who work on their behalf.

Teachers and some other professionals considered the Locality Forums as a 'safety valve'. This idea was first mentioned in a Forum meeting, and the meaning was confirmed in observations and interviews with other professionals. A 'safety valve' is a device or tool for controlling pressure. The purpose of a safety valve is to relieve pressure on a container of some kind, in a sense creating a vent. Teachers come to the meetings after having tried different means to tackle pupils' problems. Indeed, the prerequisite for cases to be discussed in Locality Forum meetings is that the schools have exhausted support (Ballian Council, 2015). These processes can be seen in the following excerpt in which a guidance teacher makes use of the Locality Forum's meeting to vent her disappointment in relation to a meeting she had with a pupil's mother:

A female pupil assaulted another pupil by kicking, pulling the hair and ripping her clothes. The guidance teacher who explains the case says she had a meeting with the girl's mum, and Amber was present in that meeting as well. The teacher thinks the meeting did not go very well. The teacher shares what she thinks about the mum based on the meeting, but asks that not be minuted, so I do not take notes. After the taking of minutes resumes, I resume writing my notes. After she finishes, Eleanor and Amber suggest that the girl is looking for a role model because the mother could not be there for her. Amber uses the words "nothing to give" (in a sympathetic tone). The teacher offers herself to be the girl's mentor for next year. [...] Later on, I reflect on how

other professionals were giving their full attention to the teacher and their faces expressed sympathy as she told her story.

(Secondary School Locality Forum, Fieldnotes)

At this meeting I observed that this teacher was not only able to share information about the pupil, but the teacher's own experience as well. She expressed emotions of disappointment and frustration, and had those emotions accepted. From the meeting with the mother, the teacher felt the mother was not going to cooperate with the school to help the pupil. She was then also able to accept the perspective of others in the meeting and move forward in her professional role by offering to mentor the pupil. In this case, the teacher benefitted as such from her peers' affirmation of the emotional demands involved in her role, as from the expertise of fellow professionals sitting around the table. This process, wherein the teacher is able to vent and then return to the 'normal conditions' of partnership working, relies on the protection of confidentiality. Teachers who vent their frustrations in Forum meetings are not letting go of their responsibility. In fact, action points resulting from the Forum meetings are usually the school's to take on, often alongside support the school has already put in place, such as continuing additional support for learning. Even when teachers have to wait for a different agency to provide support, such as a referral to CAMHS, they still have the responsibility to go back to the child/family to inform them of the meetings' results. Thus, teachers' participation in the Locality Forum's meetings potentially broadens their capacity to act in their professional roles, as a result of their involvement in meeting procedures and organisation processes, that is, the *ruling relations* of the situation.

With the introduction of the Named Person service, such functions of meetings may support professionals who are going to be the Named Person. Sometimes the teachers need people to advise them, as the following excerpt from my interview with Maureen, Star Primary School Head Teacher, shows. In this sense, the meetings are also sites of learning:

Harla: How do you become involved in the Primary School Locality Forum?

Maureen: The Primary School Locality Forum is an opportunity for different professionals to get together to discuss any children that we have, that we have concerns about, that we want a wider discussion about, so there are representatives of health visitor team, behaviour support, and children families team ehm... the CAMHS team, and various other professionals and they will come together and that means we can share information and really just clarify an approach for an individual child when we really don't know particularly what to do next. Or what to do first, really!

(Maureen, Star Primary School Head Teacher, Interview)

The excerpt shows how Maureen sees her role in the Forum with regard to her professional remit. Participating in the Forum allowed Maureen to obtain information that was generated and recorded in a setting other than school. She wanted clarification as to the school's actions from other professionals in the Forum. The Forum acts as a checking mechanism so that no one professional has all the responsibility and power (see Walker, 2008). Additionally, attending the Forum meets a need for reassurance and support for Maureen, which goes beyond the sharing of information. Maureen used the Forum meeting as a 'safety valve' for expressing uncertainty and as a 'safety net' through seeking out advice, information and expertise that other people might have.

The willingness to share or gain information and expertise lies with those involved. In turn, they are using the meeting to hone their reasoning skills and examine their own and others' knowledge (see Taylor and White, 2006). This is an additional way in which the relationships between members is an important factor that contributes to the working of the Forum. It switches the focus of professionals' engagement in the meetings from being caught up in procedures to reflexive engagement with their own and other's practice.

Freeman's (2008) analysis of learning processes in meetings presents the physical terms of communication — getting around the table and talking — as essential to the meeting. Equally important in his analysis are the social terms, both the formal elements such as prepared presentations, and informal interactions such as conversations during coffee breaks or lunch. Similarly, in elaborating the importance of the Forums, Maureen and the others refer to the interaction of formal and informal elements in representing the Forums' meetings as a comfortable and familiar space for sharing information and expertise. Therefore, the finding that multi-agency meetings can provide a supportive environment for professionals (Davis and Smith, 2012) is extended in this analysis of Forum meetings which finds they can also be supportive learning environments and safe spaces for venting.

While, for teachers, the Locality Forums' meetings addressed gaps in knowledge and acted as a safety valve, not everybody held a positive view of the Locality Forums, as was revealed in follow-up evaluations. Helen's views toward the Forums differ from the majority. She favoured discontinuing the Primary School Locality Forum. She emphasised the early intervention agenda and pointed out that the number of cases is declining:

Harla: What will happen to the Forum then?

Helen: Well today we have three reviews, no new cases.

Harla: Okay

Helen: Because they've been discussed at Stage 2. We're getting in earlier.

(Helen, Children and Families Team Leader, Interview)

In addition, Helen views the Forum as a place to discuss the transition (or not) of children and young people from Stage 2 to Stage 3 of the intervention system (as outlined in the two documents discussed in previous section). Helen was focussed on pursuing Ballian's policy intention, and in doing so overlooking the support the Forum meetings had given to the professionals. However, this does not mean Helen wants to let go the Forums altogether. For children aged 0-5 years she had just started to instigate a similar Forum with health visitors:

Helen: Huge amount of work, but I believe in it. So so that...you know

Harla: You mean you believe in the ways...to do this (have the procedures for sharing information that involves Helen collating information from and updating it to *Frameworki*)

Helen: Yes, absolutely. I really believe and so does everyone around the table and health visitors.

(Helen, Children and Families Team Leader, Interview)

Helen's view in the excerpt above seems to contradict her view about the Primary School Locality Forum. It is important to note that Helen managed both the Primary School and Naught to Five Locality Forums, and as a Team Leader of the Children and Families she was taking on board the changes in Ballian's Council policy that

may have implications for the Primary School Locality Forum. The introduction of the Named Person policy in Ballian may mean Locality Forums no longer exist. The professionals' own organisational contexts (i.e. Children and Families team) seem to influence the direction of multi-agency support. Helen played a significant role in the Locality Forums while the Forums were part of the Council's key structures.

However, if the structure changes, then Helen, as an employee of the Council, is bound to implement the changes. Unfortunately, such changes also exclude the benefits of the Forum's meetings for professionals, such as learning from others, as well as the adoption of reflexive inter-agency working. In such situations, power is hierarchical, where the Children and Families team can decide the continuation of the Locality Forum based on their organisation's policy in implementing the Named Person policy.

The dispersal of power between agencies' representatives (due to dispersal of information) is a counterpoint to hierarchical bureaucratic power. At the same time, the meetings themselves are part of Ballian's key structure in implementing GIRFEC, suggesting professionals' participation in the meetings are an example of *ruling relations* at work. The concept of ruling relations recognises the distributed, multi-sited character of power: in this way, it overlaps with Foucault's conception of power as decentred, expressed through social relations (see chapter 2).

This section has explored how meetings are perceived as supportive spaces for professionals both as a space to be reflexive and as a space which acts as a safety valve. In addition to meetings, teachers also engaged with the Children and Families team through the means of referral forms for the Locality Forum meetings. Such forms may also include Police Reports, which was applied in Jimmy's case. The next

section turns to the discussion about how the forms organise professionals' working relationships.

5.4. Using Forms to Coordinate Professionals' Work

This section addresses the research question of what inter-agency working looks like, by discussing how referral forms were used to coordinate professionals' work. This section talks about how referral forms and reports enabled professionals to come to multi-agency meetings and discuss young people with other professionals. I will focus on how such objects formalise the way professionals work together. I return to Jimmy's case, discussed in a meeting of the Early Intervention Group for Offending Children and Young People:

In the afternoon of the same day I attended the Secondary School Locality Forum meeting, I also attended a meeting of the Early Intervention Group for Offending Children and Young People at the Council's office. The people who attended the Forum and PRG at Jimmy's school were not those who attended this meeting. Jimmy was on the agenda. He was under the 'New' cases to be discussed. When I heard the same name and where he went to school, in my head I went "he was just discussed this morning in the Forum". I did not say a thing. Elisabeth, the Children and Families team manager, led the meeting in place of Morag. The case that involved Jimmy apparently also involved another young person. Elisabeth read from the meeting agenda that there had been a social worker involved with Jimmy's family (this concurs with what Amber said in the Secondary School Forum in the morning). James, a staff member from a Voluntary Sector for Young People, offered to contact the social worker that had been working with Jimmy's family. This was one of the action points of the meeting.

At one point, Elisabeth said, as she was flicking through a pile of Police Reports, “I hate these reports, I hate the formats of these reports”.

(Early Intervention Group for Offending Children and Young People, Fieldnotes)

In the previous section I discussed the frustration that Eleanor experienced when one member of the Forum did not attend the Secondary School Forum’s meeting. Here, the police officer, as a member of the Early Intervention Group did not attend the meeting and Elisabeth was filling in for Morag (Children and Families Team Leader of Bridges locality). Literature on inter-agency studies talk about differences in culture and language that professionals use and how these can be challenges for successful working together (Glaister and Glaister, 2005; Douglas and Philpot, 1998). Dislike of reporting format can be challenging as well, as Elisabeth showed. Multi-agency settings such as this Early Intervention Group deal with a number of cases that the Police referred to the Children and Families team. While forms completed by social workers, who may be concerned with who would be reading their case reports (Prince, 1996), police reports are not a means for scrutinising the performance of the professionals writing them but are simply intended to trigger direct intervention or additional support, as the following exchange with Beatrice, a Police Officer, shows:

Beatrice: I look at youth offending reports....have a look to see if we can divert that young person from prosecution or not.

Harla: So, it’s like restorative justice?

Beatrice: Yes...we decide whether or not it’s suitable for restorative justice or whether a warning would suffice or whether we need to look at getting them

involved with any other agency or a diversion programme to prevent them from offending in the future.

(Beatrice, Police Officer, Interview)

Beatrice, is also a Youth Justice Officer and so a member of the Early Intervention Group. She suggests that there has been a consideration on her side whether or not a case should be referred to the group before making the referrals. She is liaising with the Social Work division of the Council (in which the Children and Families team belongs), as the excerpt below shows:

Harla: What is the mechanism to make a referral to the forum [Early Intervention Group]?

Beatrice: I liaise very closely with Social Work and I'm aware that Education are working with them. We'll pull information, we bring the information together to determine whether or not these [young people] may be undergoing some diversionary work before and how well they engage with it...The multi-agency group that comes together for the Early Intervention Group, we talk a lot about different ideas.

(Beatrice, Police Officer, Interview)

In previous sections I have explained the relationship between the Children and Families team and the schools, and Beatrice was aware of the relationship as well. So when she brings Police Reports to the group's meetings, she read the police officers' accounts about the young people. Furthermore, the act of 'pulling information' from Social Work and Education connects activities between professionals in the two settings (and also with the other agencies involved). Beatrice and her team's process of documenting a case fixes the objectification of children or young people in writing, which reflects Weber's *rationalisation*. However, in the meeting, the process

of sharing information between Beatrice and professionals from other agencies shows how power over information is relational, which reflects Foucault's relations of power.

5.4.1. Performative texts

The way professionals 'use' text in their work can be understood by observing how their activities are coordinated (McKenzie, 2006). Information that would be put in a referral form to the Secondary School Locality Forum is a record of what is framed as 'disciplinary measures'. Eleanor explained to me the stages of disciplinary actions that her school had put in place. As quoted in Chapter 4, there are five stages and once a pupil reaches stage three and above, there is a record of that in the database system (*OnTheButton*). So Jimmy was someone whose record in *OnTheButton* was continuously being updated by his teachers. In order to get more support for him, the guidance teacher must use the record to make the referral to PRG and subsequently to the Locality Forum. Similarly, his Police Report was brought to the Early Intervention Group meeting in order to get support for him. In all three meetings (the PRG, the Locality Forum and the Early Intervention Group), his records coordinate the work done by the Children and Families team, the Police, the school and other agencies who have information about Jimmy or sharing their expertise at those meetings.

The process of sharing Jimmy's records in three different meetings suggests that his records have the capacity to help coordinate the professionals' actions as they engage in the meetings. The meetings themselves are discursive practices where discursive power operates through compliance to the meetings' referral procedures. Together,

the sharing of information and the meetings reflect how *ruling relations* work in shaping professionals' working together to help Jimmy.

The following excerpt from an informal talk with Amber, the Children and Families team leader, again shows how activities of different professionals are coordinated, this time around the Forum's referral form (see Appendix 8 for the blank version):

The minutes of the Secondary School Locality Forum at Sisters High School are sent through a secure email by the school's administrator to all members of the Forum. The administrator at Children and Families would receive the email, with the minutes and then upload parts of the minutes into *Frameworki* for the relevant child or young person. Amber tells me that, in Snows High School Locality Forum, there is no admin worker from the school, so the meeting leader (the Depute Head Teacher) would fill in the Forum's referral forms as the meeting discusses the case for each pupil. These will be the minutes.

(Amber, Children and Families Team Leader, Informal Talk)

There are two ways of looking at this excerpt. First, is to point at the important role of an administrator or one of the 'key' people in inter-agency working that I have discussed in the previous chapter. However, it also points to the role of forms in relation to the meetings, to which my discussion now turns. I start with tracing the Forum's referral forms. The forms already had information that 'activated' the Locality Forum meeting. The forms were then added to with notes from the discussion, by the meeting leader. In so doing, the meeting leader contributed to making the information *performative* (Thompson, 2016). The information leads to action.

However, I am extending Thompson's idea, as tracking the information lends a lens that would enable us to look at how the meeting leader's work and other professionals' work are organised. This approach is aligned with Institutional Ethnography's notion of tracing social organisation (Smith, 1990a). Tracing the information enables us to see how one person's doings are connected to another person's doings. The focus here is on the example of how professionals' actions were coordinated around the Forum's referral form. However, the significance of forms in this context reminds us of the problems of forms as records and their relation to ICT use in a social work context. It is then worth acknowledging a few of the problems here. In relation to needs assessment forms, Munro (2005) argues that such tools often are not helping the professionals in their work. Instead they have the tendency to distract professionals from the actual work of meeting with children or families. Such actual work, she argues, lies in the interaction and not in the texts.

In Jimmy's case, we see how Elisabeth was upset when reading the police report. She was put off by the format when trying to get more information. Elisabeth was not a police officer and she disliked the format. Different organisations have different recording and reporting forms, influenced in part by what theory guides their practice (Davis, 2011). Referral forms can be seen as a formalisation of work procedures (Munro, 2005). My observations support this idea and confirm that such formalisation can be a problem in inter-agency working context. Such a problem was also indicated by Yvonne (a Health Visitor Team Manager) during my interview with her:

If a health visitor has concerns regarding social issues with the family, s/he would contact the social work team (at the Council) through their referral

process using the referral form (Appendix 9). Following that, it is expected that the health visitor would put a note on TRAK (health database system) record of work with the family that a contact with the social work team has been made, but this annotation depends on the health visitor. Also, the health visitor is expected to follow up with the worker at the Council but, again, Yvonne said that this depends on the person.

(Yvonne, Health Visitor Team Manager, Interview)

The excerpt shows that the process of updating information on TRAK following an inter-agency communication depends on the health visitor. Thus the texts on the TRAK may not be the best representation of what the professionals, both the health visitor and the social work team, have ‘performed’. This shows the complexity of inter-agency work in that each agency has its own system, procedures and remits, which make professionals at the front-line of inter-agency working practice constantly confronting, negotiating and navigating complex relations of power.

Thus far I have discussed the criticism that preoccupation with record keepings potentially distracts social work professionals from spending time building relationships with the service users; children and families (Munro, 2005; Prince, 1996). However, prescribed formats such as referral forms were more than mere requirements. During the meetings I observed, the oral discussions were triggered by the referral forms. Additional text was added to the forms during meetings. The forms were read in quick succession. Filling in the forms led to professionals being able to discuss with other professionals children’s and young people’s situations and the support that had been or should be given to them. Forms connect such discussions to the organisational system (Thompson, 2016). The Locality Forums’ referral forms and the referral forms to the Children and Families are part of what

professionals called the ‘system’, and forms also connect to record keeping both at school and Children and Families because they involve the use of a computer database and an administrator and other colleagues at school.

5.4.2. Named Person creates new forms – moving relations to text

In this section we have seen how forms as documents connect professionals’ work and coordinate their actions through meetings. The introduction of the new Wellbeing Concerns Forms (Appendix 10a and 10b) as part of the Named Person service was due to change the ways meetings and forms work in the implementation of GIRFEC and therefore change professionals’ work. The new forms consist of the “wellbeing concerns form” (Appendix 10a) for recording wellbeing concerns by professionals, and the “wellbeing concerns discussion form” for the Named Person to record his/her discussion about the wellbeing concerns at PRGs (Appendix 10b). These forms will change the way professionals fill in forms. A cautionary note from the social work field is that constructing texts in a report involves ‘extra work’ if the professional knows other professionals or the family are going to read it (Prince, 1996). The wellbeing concerns form (Appendix 10a) will become a tool for recording that will then be passed on to the Named Persons from which they will judge the need for involving other professionals and decide the action point. As the promoted teachers participate in using the Wellbeing Concerns Forms and accessing the read-only *Frameworki*, they again participate in a ruling procedure that changes the way they work with other professionals. In addition, as the Named Person’s role is attached to their professional remit, the promoted teachers work in relation to assessing, recording, and sharing information about their pupils will also change. The unintended consequences of the implementation of Named Person service are

complex, and there is a risk they could run into the danger of being preoccupied with procedures (see Munro, 2005; Wattam, 2008) and losing the multi-agency perspectives that the Locality Forums provided (see Davis and Smith, 2012).

Therefore, the introduction of the new Wellbeing Concerns Forms, especially at the beginning of its use, will require practice and time as professionals use it. The wellbeing concerns form (Appendix 10a) would be introduced not only to teachers but to all professionals working with children. Amber, the Children and Families Team Leader, told the Secondary School Locality Forum meeting that the form will change how professionals record concerns about children. Moreover, the practice of using this new form may intensify *ruling relations* for the Named Persons because the work interfaces with their own remit.

Without the Locality Forums, a collective reading and interpretation that has been the benefit of the forums' meetings would not happen. Regarding the Named Person as a service, and not a single person, a Council might create a gatekeeping system where the wellbeing concerns form would be first screened by the Council's member of administrative staff, such is what one Local Authority plans to do (Neri, 2016). A similar idea was brought up by NHS Lothian during the consultation of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill (Scotland Parliament, 2013). The proposal was to delegate some administrative tasks required of a Named Person to other staff, as a way to address concerns about practicality and resources surrounding the Named Person policy.

The Named Person is not necessarily the person to provide the service or support for children and families. A warning from social work literature might be useful, where

it has been found that families can have a pile of paperwork but no service because they are caught in bureaucracy that impedes services (Prince, 1996). Thus there is a danger that the Named Person might become the subject of bureaucratic power created by the Named Person policy. With this in mind, Ballian's proposal to have the Children and Families Team Leaders attend the PRGs, as was mentioned by Henry (Education staff member at the Council) during the GIRFEC training that I observed, is central to implementing the Named Person service. My analysis confirms that team leaders will need to work alongside the Named Person to process information and assess cases that are referred to the service. Delivering the Named Person service is not a one-person act.

At the time of writing Ballian might have developed a gatekeeping mechanism to prevent the Named Person being overwhelmed with information and forms. As the designing of the service continues, it remains paramount to recognise professionals' intricate processes of sharing information in order for policies to best support their work (Munro, 2005). The next chapter talks about some plans that Ballian had put in place to implement the Named Person service in more detail.

In summary, this section extended the discussion about forms that were used at Locality Forums' meetings in order to examine the procedures of working together between the school and the Children and Families team. The forms provide information that leads to action. In other words, the forms have performative functions (Thompson, 2016). However, 'performative' here can be extended to the forms acting as a lens to perceive how professionals' work is organised (Smith, 1990a). I found in Ballian that the referral forms prompted a formal procedure where Locality Forum meetings happened. For the meetings to take place, professionals,

especially the head/guidance teachers as well as the Children and Families team members and leaders, would seek information in their own organisation first before discussing them in the meeting and then taking the action point forward if tasked. As in the case of the implementation of the Named Person policy in Ballian includes the introduction of the new Wellbeing Concerns Forms, such a change informs the way professionals work together.

5.5. Conclusion

This chapter has considered what inter-agency working looks like and what the ruling relations governing working together look like, through analysis of the function of meetings and forms. In particular, my discussion of promoted teachers' roles in this chapter, which is especially relevant in light of the introduction of the Named Person policy, demonstrates potential benefits and challenges for those involved in inter-agency working.

It is important to acknowledge that early intervention has already begun within the school setting, through school-based procedures, as a necessary preliminary step before referral to the Pupil Referral Group and Locality Forum. Furthermore, the meetings did not necessarily result in more support for children and families. It was the responsibility of teachers involved to go back to them and report the 'result' of the meetings, and to contact other professionals who did not come to the meetings if necessary.

Meetings and forms are mechanisms that coordinate professionals' work. As *meetings*, the Pupil Referral Group and Locality Forum meetings are the place where different professionals sit together to discuss concerns about children's wellbeing,

and to decide whether additional support is needed. This means the participants have different roles: bringing cases to discuss, taking away action points, contributing their expertise and contributing information regarding a child or family. As such, a meeting is an organised activity. It formalises information sharing by the professionals.

Teachers as well as other professionals, such as members of the Children and Families team, spoke about the usefulness of Locality Forum meetings as a means of sharing information and expertise in assessing the needs of children and young people referred. They perceived the meetings as promoting supportive relationships between professionals and facilitating a reflexive approach to their practice.

Furthermore, my analysis of the interaction within Locality Forum meetings produced the insight that such meetings provide another unintended benefit. The Locality Forum meetings were useful for venting, meaning they fulfil an additional function to the one intended. While policy documents suggested the meetings would operate as the equivalent of a 'safety net' for children, I found they also operated as a 'safety valve' for professionals, a safe space to vent feelings of frustration or uncertainty. As teachers attended multi-agency meetings and looked for support and advice, they were also able to acknowledge their frustration with difficult aspects of their work in an accepting environment.

Power relations between agencies are embedded in the formal procedures of inter-agency working. These seemed to sometimes increase the challenges of teachers' role. There was a disparity in the levels of responsibility for and access to information between promoted teachers and the Children and Families team, for

example. This meant promoted teachers were more dependent on others for information. In addition, lack of information available in a meeting or the absence of other agencies from meetings could lead to a lack of action or to delays which, as noted above, the promoted teachers must explain to young people and their families. Furthermore, the role of teachers involved in implementing GIRFEC requires them to carry out functions associated with social work and to adapt to procedures which reflect the ruling relations of social work settings, such as the Children and Families team.

In this chapter, I identified how individuals' work is framed by their roles, the procedures of working together (GIRFEC) and the ruling relations of the council's organisation. Inter-agency working might offer an alternative to the top-down power of conventional organisation of children's service work (Glasby and Dickinson, 2014). This chapter discussed one of the challenges of inter-agency working: that is, the inequality in power to access and act on information. The Locality Forum meetings show how power is dispersed and its relations are unstable; the meetings are a site which facilitates professionals' sharing of expertise and their capacity for reflexivity from the perspective of their individual experiences. Thus, actual interactions between people in inter-agency working cannot be understood only in terms of the bureaucracy in which the meetings are embedded. Meetings as 'safety valve' and informal interpersonal interactions exceed the procedures that organise meetings, while also contributing to the purpose and support the processes of inter-agency working.

Referral forms, and other forms that were used to discuss children and young people in meetings that I observed, were formalising the work procedures of inter-agency

working. Such formalisation has been long argued as to be problematic (Munro, 2005) in a child protection context in so far as it takes professionals away from attending to their service users. However, I argue it is important to recognise that the forms have a performative function (Thompson, 2016), which means they can lead to action which constitute part of the service provided to service users. Such forms can also be used as the lens that enables us to understand how professionals' work is organised (Smith, 1990a). For example, the new wellbeing concerns form was introduced as part of implementing the Named Person policy, and could be observed changing promoted teachers' practice of recording and sharing concerns, and also practices of other professionals involved. This introduction showed a ruling relation – because it organised teachers' concerns into a new set of formal procedures that made use of the language of wellbeing indicators. As discussed in the previous chapter, professionals' judgements were incorporated in information about children and families. Therefore, a change in forms would mean the way promoted teachers interrogated their judgements would also change. As Named Persons, they would be responsible for receiving the forms that textually mediated concerns raised by other professionals. It is worth noting that, receiving and recording would involve the use of different computerised database systems and other professionals in other setting such as the Children and Families team, and so enacting such roles may be challenging for (even) promoted teachers.

Unfortunately, instead of appreciating the Named Person *as professionals* in their own right, the current debate surrounding the Named Person policy is driven by critics' claim that the Named Person are the state's agents (Waiton, 2016) who are ready to interfere with family life whenever they have the chance. This idea, which is

sustained by the flaws in the policy's design (see *The Christian Institute and others v The Lord Advocate* [2016] UKSC 51) should not take away attention from the institutional complexities that the future Named Persons are facing and the need to create a supportive space for the future Named Person to do their job.

The next chapter will distinguish and contrast the Named Person as a person and a service. The analysis of Chapter 6 was built on the findings that I have discussed in both Chapters 4 and 5. How certain elements of the Named Person policy implementation in Ballian, such as the introduction of new Wellbeing Concerns Forms, have changed relationships between professionals in schools and the Children and Families team will be discussed. The chapter provides cautionary analysis on the policy claim that “head teachers and guidance/pupil support teachers are already carrying out many aspects of the Named Person role as part of their day-to-day work” (Scottish Government, 2014a, p2).

Chapter 6 – The Named Person: a person or a service?

6.1. Introduction

Against the backdrop of the Named Person provision being introduced to Local Authorities, my research asked the question: what do the Named Persons do when they work together with other professionals in implementing GIRFEC? This chapter answers that question by building the arguments from Chapter 4 and 5. The Ballian Council required me to acknowledge in this thesis that the analysis of this chapter is based on data generated when the Council was “designing and implementing the Named Person provision” (thus, it was not yet statutory).

The debates around the Named Person assume that professionals have the power to share information when they deem appropriate. Yet my research shows that, in the case of teachers in promoted posts, their relationships with information were more complex, and guarded by procedures (i.e. the teachers making referrals to the Pupil Referral Group or Locality Forum meetings).

The teachers must manage the potential uncertainty around information sharing, procedural outcomes and outcomes of interventions for the pupil. The same procedures which could bring them closer to helpful information might sustain uncertainty for teachers; for example, when information is needed but the professional with the information does not attend the Locality Forum meeting or does attend but is unable to provide it.

I argue that the Named Person is both a *service* and a *person*. For ease of reading in this chapter, “the Named *Person*” is used from here on to indicate the Named Person as a *person*, while “the Named Person *service*” is used to indicate the Named Person as a *service*. The Named Person is an additional role for professionals, potentially requiring additional knowledge and skills in order to take on the role and; implementing the Named Person *service* is creating a new bureaucracy of inter-agency working among professionals within children’s services.

In this chapter, the analysis sheds further light on earlier discussion regarding the political, theoretical and practical orientation of GIRFEC. The *political* aspect highlights issues of minimising bureaucracy, partnering with community and service users, as well as effective services linked with efficient budgeting (Stradling and Alexander, 2012). Meanwhile, the *theoretical* facet emphasises the holistic view of childhood and the ecological perspective of ‘wellbeing’ (Scottish Government, 2008). The *practical* aspect of GIRFEC concerns changes in how service providers deliver services for children and families. GIRFEC promotes change that invests in partnerships, inclusion and participation (Tisdall and Davis, 2015). The interaction of the political, theoretical and practical orientations of GIRFEC is complex in nature and inherently problematic, and thus not yet resolved (Coles et al., 2016). Chapters 4 and 5, which explicate inter-agency working, show how GIRFEC implementation is complex in practice. Extending from this will be a discussion on how the Named Person, as both a service and a person, adds to this complexity.

In GIRFEC policy documents (e.g. Scottish Government 2008, 2012a), the Named Person is introduced alongside the ‘Lead Professional’. If more than one agency is required to respond to the needs of a child, or in other words if multi-agency support

needs to be in place, then the Named *Person* may become the Lead Professional or hand over the responsibility of coordinating support to the Lead Professional (Scottish Government, 2012a). However, my research focussed on the roles of the Named *Person* and therefore, this chapter only uses parts of the policy documents specific to the Named *Person*'s roles. The Named Person part of the Revised Draft Statutory Guidance (RDSG), of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 (Scottish Government, 2015), aims to provide:

Clearer statements about the distinction between the Named Person service, the identified Named Person and the Named Person functions; and more emphasis on professional dialogue and the integration of the Named Person role in current practice.

(Scottish Government, 2015, p3)

This thesis does not evaluate whether the RDSG has achieved its aims. Rather, this chapter seeks to consider the issues raised in practice by the above statement. The latter aim suggests that implementing the Named Person policy requires professionals and agencies to work together. I thus argue that the integration of the Named *Person* functions into current practice, also refers to inter-agency work practices, and not only to professional (e.g. Head Teacher, Health Visitor) work practices. With this in mind, for professionals to enact the functions of the Named *Person* integral to their day-to-day remit, 'the integration' will have consequences to their current inter-agency working practices. The following excerpt from the RDSG locates the Named *Person* within the Named Person *service*:

While a single point of contact will be available through the Named Person service, the GIRFEC approach does not stop children, young people or parents from contacting services directly for advice or support, as many do at

present. Access to a single point of contact - the Named Person - is an entitlement for children and young people.

(Scottish Government, 2015, p6)

This paragraph refers to the Named Person as both a *service* and a *person*. The first sentence suggests that whilst the Named Person provides ‘a single point of contact’, service users can also contact professionals other than the Named *Person*. While maintaining this right, the second sentence makes clear that this ‘single point of contact’ is indeed a *person*.

I begin by discussing the Named *Person* (Section 6.2), and follow this by discussion of the Named Person *service* (Section 6.3). Such a distinction is useful to dissect conflated discussions around ‘the Named Person’ found during my fieldwork. The arguments in this chapter are built upon the research findings in order to reveal how the introduction of the Named Person provision influenced the inter-agency working mechanisms in Ballian’s children’s services. The last two sections (Sections 6.4 and 6.5) explore how the professionals’ working relations were caught up in this distinction (person or service).

6.2. The Named Person as a *person*

The Named Person provision is part of Scotland’s *Getting It Right For Every Child* (GIRFEC) national policy approach. It is enshrined in Part 4 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act of 2014. Paragraph 19 of Part 4 – Provisions of Named Persons—states: ‘(1) In this Part, “named person service” means the service of making available, in relation to a child or young person, an identified individual who is to exercise the functions in subsection (5).’

‘(5) The functions referred to in subsection (1) are—

(a) subject to subsection (6), doing such of the following where the named person considers it to be appropriate in order to promote, support or safeguard the wellbeing of the child or young person—

(i) advising, informing or supporting the child or young person, or a parent of the child or young person,

(ii) helping the child or young person, or a parent of the child or young person, to access a service or support, or

(iii) discussing, or raising, a matter about the child or young person with a service provider or relevant authority, and

(b) such other functions as are specified by this Act or any other enactment as being functions of a named person in relation to a child or young person.’

Virtually all children in Scotland, from birth to 18 years of age (or beyond if still in school), will have a Named *Person*. To reiterate, the Named *Person* is a single point of contact for children, parents and other professionals who can help them access services and identify where there may be concerns about children’s wellbeing. For most children, these professionals are health visitors for pre-school children, and a head teacher or guidance teacher for school-aged children (Scottish Government, 2016). This means, in relation to the Named Person in the Education sector, the Local Authorities have a duty to identify the *person*.

These functions were reflected in the way *key people* worked together during my fieldwork. For example, Head Teachers in primary schools were already doing points

(i), (ii) and (iii) of the above, in fact they were exceeding the parameters of point (5). The Head Teachers were already following the Schools' procedures. This involved discussing with, and seeking the consent of children and parents with regard to support needs. Furthermore, the teachers were also compliant with inter-agency working procedures which involved discussions with other professionals through the Pupil Referral Group and Locality Forum meetings. This practice is in accordance with Davis and Hughes (2005) research into competencies, qualifications and skills of Early Years service staff in which they define 'key workers roles'. The roles include communicating with child/family and linking families to other services (Davis and Smith, 2012, p3).

Other *key people* also had roles in the functions above. For example, taking action may mean conducting an assessment, which Davis and Hughes (2005) considered as one of the 'key worker roles'. In my research, conducting assessments is close to the role of the Family Support Worker. The Children and Families Team would have information about a child's family and any other social work support of which the school may be unaware. Also, as discussed in Chapter 4, the process of information sharing between any two service providers would likely involve Administrative Staff.

In this section, I further explain how the Named *Person* functions were realised through interconnected activities of the *key people* mentioned at the beginning of this chapter. I start with Maureen, Star Primary School Head Teacher. The following excerpt explains how Maureen attempted to obtain more information about a particular pupil who was having difficulties at school, and how that led her to the Locality Forum:

Harla: Okay...what do you think...when you bring cases forward, why do you need wider discussion?

Maureen: I suppose because sometimes different services might have different information or links to that actual family and to that child, who we may not be aware of, so if the police officer attends as well we might have information from the police about the family. Also, if there are younger siblings, they might have information about younger siblings that we don't have. Just a way of coming together, and also to talk about particular issues with the children and get professional advice about what might be the best approach. Whether it's going to be speech therapy, whether behaviour support, whether the Children and Families team gets involved in a child protection way. So it's just really to reach a kind of consensus discussion for things like that rather than doing it in an isolated way.

Harla: Alright...when you say in isolation do you mean only in school?

Maureen: Yeah, rather than just me saying 'right I think we need to do a referral to occupational therapy or I think this', the kind of 'we' behind it so that you've got a discussion of different people with different experiences.

(Maureen, Star Primary School Head Teacher, Interview)

Going to the Locality Forum meeting was a way for Maureen to get the support she needed in order to do her job as a Head Teacher. From Maureen's point of view, information from other professionals was important for her confidence: this is highlighted by Maureen herself, who mentions the importance of 'we'. This is not to undermine the school staff's responsibility; pupils who are brought to the Forum meetings have already received one or more interventions from school staff, as discussed in Chapters 4 and 5. Rather, the Forum meetings allowed Maureen to have support from other professionals, either through information or by having a discussion about her school's strategy to help the pupil.

The Forum's meeting provided space for increasing the promoted teachers' confidence, and this is an added benefit to studies on inter-agency working that mainly focussed on impersonal benefits, such as efficiency and good communication (e.g. Douglas and Philpot, 1998; Polivka et al., 2001). The Forum's meeting is one of Ballian's structures for implementing GIRFEC (see Chapter 5) and Maureen's participation in it contributes to her confidence. Specifically, the discussion she had by participating in the Forum's meetings is what led to her confidence. This finding adds to the understanding of *ruling relations* in Institutional Ethnography (IE). The tenet of IE is that such structure represents *ruling relations* and people's participation in *ruling relations* shape their everyday work, but 'confidence' through interaction with other professionals, as an unintended consequence of that participation, is what I have identified in my research.

Confidence is an important issue for the Named *Persons*. How taking on the role of Named *Person* would influence the professional's confidence is implicit in the following interview excerpt from Dawn, a Guidance Teacher at Sisters High School, who expressed her concerns about the roles of the Named Person succinctly:

Dawn: I don't think it's necessary. How can teachers be Named Person, because we finish work theoretically at 2.30, start at 20 to 9, what happens outwith that time. So the models I've heard, even just the management of it, is gonna be an absolute nightmare. And the paperwork that's gonna go with it, is going to be really time consuming. Any teacher with a concern can fill in a form (wellbeing concerns form) and there needs to be action. So a pupil has not had a pencil all week, Now my response will never be "so, what?!", absolutely not! But I don't need a form, all I need is to say to the pupil "why you haven't got a pencil?" or "come to me every morning and I'll give you a pencil" or phone the parent "oh really sorry, we can't afford", 'that's fine

we'll do that''''. I think it's gonna really really open a can of worms. And my worry is that teachers are gonna be put in the position where anything they're worry about, better putting in referral.

(Dawn, Sisters High School Guidance Teacher, Interview)

The Named Person provision brought changes to the way things work for Dawn as a Guidance Teacher. Such changes will be discussed later; here I would like to emphasise Dawn's attitude toward 'filling in a form' as part of the Named Person's role. I did not assume that meant she puts less care into administrative work. Instead my attention was directed to her locating her professional remit as a teacher first and Named *Person* second. As a Guidance Teacher, Dawn's first approach toward a pupil in need would be to address the need by communicating with either the pupil or the parent, and not filling in a wellbeing concerns form. Therefore, understanding how the promoted teachers would 'integrate' the role of a Named *Person* into their everyday work must consider how the requirements of the role could fit within this approach. Dawn immediately linked the Named Person legislation to her everyday practice in relation to providing support for her pupils. While making the link between 'filling in a form' and 'referral', I argue that Dawn is seeing the Named *Person*'s role as 'integral' to her participation in the 'structure' of implementing GIRFEC in Ballian. As follow up of the referral process was the Locality Forums, thus the Forums being reviewed and potentially disbanded (see Chapter 5) as part of implementing the Named Person *service* would affect the promoted teachers' confidence.

Looking at the functions of the Named *Person*, there are active roles that are expected to be undertaken, ranging from identifying and receiving concerns, to

taking action and making decisions supporting the child or young person. Chapter 4 indicates that the process of identifying concerns comes about through daily observations by teachers. As concerns grow, the Primary School Head Teachers and Secondary School Guidance Teachers discuss possible interventions, such as accessing the services of an Education Psychologist or Education Welfare Officer at the Council, and contacting the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS).

In conducting their active roles, some teachers need to interact and communicate with other practitioners. The way things work for teachers in relation to those activities are complex and require working arrangements with other professionals within and beyond the school. For example, Chapter 4 shows how a Head Teacher needs to be informed should there be any concerns regarding the pupils; the Head Teacher needs to have access to information about the pupils' and their families' involvement with the Social Work Team at the Council; the Head Teacher has a mechanism by which she/he can involve other agencies when necessary. All of these inter-agency working mechanisms were changing in Ballian with the introduction of the Named Person policy. The work of a Head/Guidance Teacher required new 'systems', to use Dawn's words, meaning different kinds of meetings and referrals. Therefore, the assumption that they are already carrying out these roles as part of their day-to-day work means that the Scottish Government (2014a) has overlooked the changes these teachers must deal with.

Although teachers have become familiar with GIRFEC, their familiarity may be attached to the mechanisms around it, such as the Locality Forum meetings.

According to Eleanor, a Deputy Head Teacher who chaired the Locality Forum

meetings at Sisters High School, GIRFEC was a response to the needs of joined-up working relations between services:

Harla: You mentioned earlier that the partnership working is related with *getting it right for every child*. I'm curious, how did you become familiar with the framework or the approach?

Eleanor: For the Secondary School Locality Forum or for GIRFEC?

Harla: For GIRFEC.

Eleanor: Again...it's a difficult one to answer cause it's so...been around for a long time now. I've become familiar with it, with the...I suppose...before the legislation came into place and the policies of Ballian, it ties in with really just what we're trying to do in Sisters High School, the philosophy, the values we have, all about inclusion and... we recognised that it needed to be more joined-up working. It wasn't any good for a young person to have a meeting in school one day about their education and two days later with the Children and Families team about being looked after, and then next week with health about....d'you know. The whole thing should really... better to have one meeting, one plan, we were all working together.

(Eleanor, Sisters High School Deputy Head Teacher, Interview)

GIRFEC is based on inter-agency working, as the excerpt suggests, and it was in line with what Eleanor and the school had been trying to do. This is important to note as it meant that GIRFEC responded to, or at the very least, matched what the professionals and the school had been doing. What Eleanor said about children and families having one meeting and one plan echoes GIRFEC's promise of avoiding duplication and overlap in children's services (Hill, 2012; Stradling and Alexander, 2012). Also, the excerpt suggests that by working with other professionals in the Locality Forum meetings, Eleanor was able to connect her work within broader

welfare issues, such as health and social work; this has been considered a benefit of local forums (Davis and Smith, 2012).

The following excerpt shows how Wanda, Chapel Primary School Head Teacher, convinced a family to engage with family support work in the time between two Primary School Locality Forum meetings taking place:

Wanda: ...with that particular case, it was about working with the family in that interim time. And that particular case also involved working with the police in the intervening time as well.

Harla: What ways of working with the family? Is it school-based intervention?

Wanda: And that that family was reluctant to engage with the Children and Families team, with family support working, so some of that time... in between the Primary School Locality Forum meetings is about just building that discussion and having that sort of open sharing with the parent. So that they may be more prepared when...because I think I was able to go to that one (meeting) and said 'actually I've spoken to the family and that they were feeling that family support may be appropriate and might there be something they could do'. So that sort of discussion in the interim time is important.

Harla: And then who takes that forward? Let's say from your discussion they seem okay, the family's going to allow a Family Support Worker to come, then do you take that forward?

Wanda: At that point the Family Support Worker would make contact, if it's been allocated, but...one of the downsides I suppose it's the...you've talked about the time delay in between the Locality Forum meetings, you've noticed cause you've been to the Locality Forum meetings, and then there'll be another delay while that family's on the waiting list for that Family Support. So I suppose there's a sort of ... time delay can be significant for the family. Particularly at the moment, coming up to the summer, and that family and

other families, school is kind of regular, constant, for the child and for the parents. And sometimes when you take that away, summer holidays can be very difficult. So I would hope that family support workers, if they're gonna accept that and engage on a voluntary basis, would be in place before the summer.

(Wanda, Chapel Primary School Head Teacher, Interview)

The first half of this excerpt shows explicitly how a Head Teacher is working to connect the family and the Children and Families Team service (in this case the Family Support element). The second half of this excerpt indicates Wanda's expectation that Family Support would be available during the summer holidays, an issue that has been questioned many times in the Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill consultations (Scottish Parliament, 2013) on the Named Person provision.

Wanda explained how relations between the School and the Children and Families Team were triggered in the Forum's meeting and in the time between the Forum's meetings. In both cases, Wanda played an important role in maintaining communication with the family, which then led to the family's willingness to have Family Support's involvement. This echoes the call for a universal service to be more involved in identifying concerns, as discussed in the social work literature (Munro, 2011) and in GIRFEC's approach to early intervention (Scottish Government and Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, 2008). The incorporation of relations between settings makes it clear that as a *person*, the Named Person's work is related to the work of other professionals. Beyond that, what Wanda did in connecting the two settings (her school and the Children and Families team)

stemmed from the realisation that supporting pupils and families is not limited to school operational months.

This is paramount to understanding how the soon-to-be Named *Person* will undertake this responsibility alongside their other professional remits. The Scottish Government (2016) says, “the Named Person duties are integrated into their current role and strengthen the support they currently provide, formalising their role as a central contact for children, parents and other people working with them” (p6).

However, I have shown that a Head Teacher’s (like Wanda) current role in supporting her pupils is already likely to involve professionals outside Education.

The following excerpt is from my interview with Wanda, where she explains further her communication with the child/family after a Locality Forum meeting:

Harla: In this particular case, after the Forum, do you take forward any other actions or interventions, or contact the family?

Wanda: I did speak to the family in this case, and just said that it had been discussed and where it went and what the actions were from that. I don’t always do that because sometimes there’s already engagement with other people who may have been talking to them.

(Wanda, Chapel Primary School Head Teacher, Interview)

The above shows Wanda’s communication with the pupil’s family on reporting about the Locality Forum meeting – although that action is considered not necessary if Wanda knows another professional has contacted the family as a follow up from the Forum’s meeting. As the Named *Person* is ‘central contact’ for service users and other professionals (Scottish Government, 2016), what Wanda did in the excerpt may seem to fit with the Named Person policy intention. However, as a Named *Person*,

Wanda's role as the 'central contact' will be formalised and may give her more responsibility in inter-agency communications in the future. On that note, we turn to the Named Person as a *service*.

6.3. The Named Person as a *service*

According to the Scottish Government (2014a):

“The Named Person service includes the communication infrastructure, professional support, governance framework and the maintenance of local policies, protocols, procedures, guidance and training; plus communication about the role of the Named Person, how the role will be delivered locally, and how to contact a child's Named Person” (p1).

Terminology like 'communication infrastructure', 'professional support' and so on, requires explication. Building on the discussion from Chapter 5, the work of meetings and referral forms make up the 'communication infrastructure' of the Named Person *service*. I have discussed how difficult it was to connect the two different settings (i.e. a school and the Children and Families team), and yet teachers find solace in Locality Forum meetings as cathartic experiences.

Chapter 5 argues that meetings and referral forms enable concerns to be discussed and recorded. These two facets organise professionals' ways of working together. Meetings act as space for practitioners to communicate with each other. The Referral Forms are a way of standardising concerns which are assessed according to the required criteria. This section focusses on how Stage 2 meetings and Wellbeing Concerns Forms worked to coordinate activities related to the Named Person *service*.

6.3.1. Supporting the Named Person(s)

The previous chapter discussed the Pupil Referral Group (PRG) meetings (Stage 2), proposed by the Children and Families Team, as a way forward for inter-agency working. The emphasis on these meetings within the agenda of early intervention was made clear by Helen and Amber. This was underlined by observation of GIRFEC training, as the following excerpt suggests:

Henry (the trainer) says “Stage 2 for Named Person is critical”. He then further explains that it is critical for assessing and discussing cases to prevent them going to child protection. He then continues by saying “family support manager is key to the Stage 2 meetings”, as he refers to Stage 2 meetings already being held in secondary schools. I believe Henry refers the term ‘family support manager’ to people like Amber and Helen (Children and Families Team Leader) because prior to this training, he said similar things to Amber and Helen in the Named Person Implementation Group meeting.

(GIRFEC Training, Fieldnotes)

Henry, Ballian’s Education division team member, argues for the importance of Stage 2 (additional support within universal service) in implementing the Named Person *service*. The Stage 2 or PRG meetings should take place in schools and be chaired by Head Teachers (i.e. Named *Persons*), suggesting people like Amber and Helen are crucial in the meetings, which implies the support given to the Named *Person*. Analysing the Named Person as a *service* drew my attention to relationships between *key people* of my research. The definition of the Named Person *service*, above, includes ‘professional support’; Henry’s comments suggest the support that Amber and Helen give to the Head Teachers as such. This support resonates with the ‘early intervention’ focus; an idea that GIRFEC promotes (see Chapter 2, page 58)

and Helen (the Children and Families Team Leader) told me regarding the “Naught to Five Forum” with health visitors which she managed (see Chapter 5, page 230).

Amber and Helen had a supporting role because of information they had on the children and families, and because of the way in which the meetings were managed. By the time I finished my fieldwork, Amber and Helen, as Children and Families Team Leaders, had been playing a key role in ‘managing’ the Locality Forum meetings. For example, in Chapter 5 I discussed how Amber and her team members made sure the cases discussions in the Secondary School Locality Forum meetings followed Ballian’s “stages of interventions”, and Helen chaired the Primary School Locality Forum and provided administration support to the Forum. As the excerpt above suggests, they also play an important role in the PRG meetings; their relationships with Head Teachers (at Primary School) and Guidance Teachers (at Secondary School) will likely change as the information sharing process changes when the teachers have access to *Frameworki* in the future.

There is another important aspect of ‘communication infrastructure’, as the following excerpt, from a GIRFEC Practice and Training Group meeting, shows. The group consisted of Team Leaders of Children and Families at Ballian, Health Visitors’ Team Leaders, Senior Occupational Therapists at CAMHS, Physiotherapy Team Leaders, Duty Social Workers, and School Nurse Team Leaders. It was chaired by Matilda, the GIRFEC Development Officer at Ballian:

The group is discussing the importance of children and families to know who the child’s Named *Person* is. Mairi (Physiotherapy Team Leader) says there will be a booklet from the NHS about “the Named Person for families”. When someone suggests, for a primary school child, to put the Named *Person*’s

name on the child's "Red Book"²⁰, Naomi (School Nurse Team Leader) responds by suggesting to put "___ Health Visiting Team" instead. To which Helen (Children and Families Team Leader) asks 'so Named Person can be not a person, but a team?' Then the discussion goes on about the information one Named Person must have if they are from health. Mairi then says the *Frameworki* (the database operated by Children and Families Team) is going to be able to talk to TRAK (the database operated by the health board). Everybody is pleased hearing the news. With Helen commenting, "It's about time. I've only been asking for it for ten years". However, there is no exact date on when it is going to happen.

(GIRFEC Practice and Training Group, Fieldnotes)

The group discussed the practicalities of putting into practice the components of the Named Person as *service*, which entails communicating information about the Named Person to children and families. In that discussion, an interesting issue whether a Named *Person* can be a team was raised. The issue was not discussed further. Nevertheless, it serves as an example of how the discussion about *service* ('communicating' the role of Named *Person*) is inseparable to the *person*.

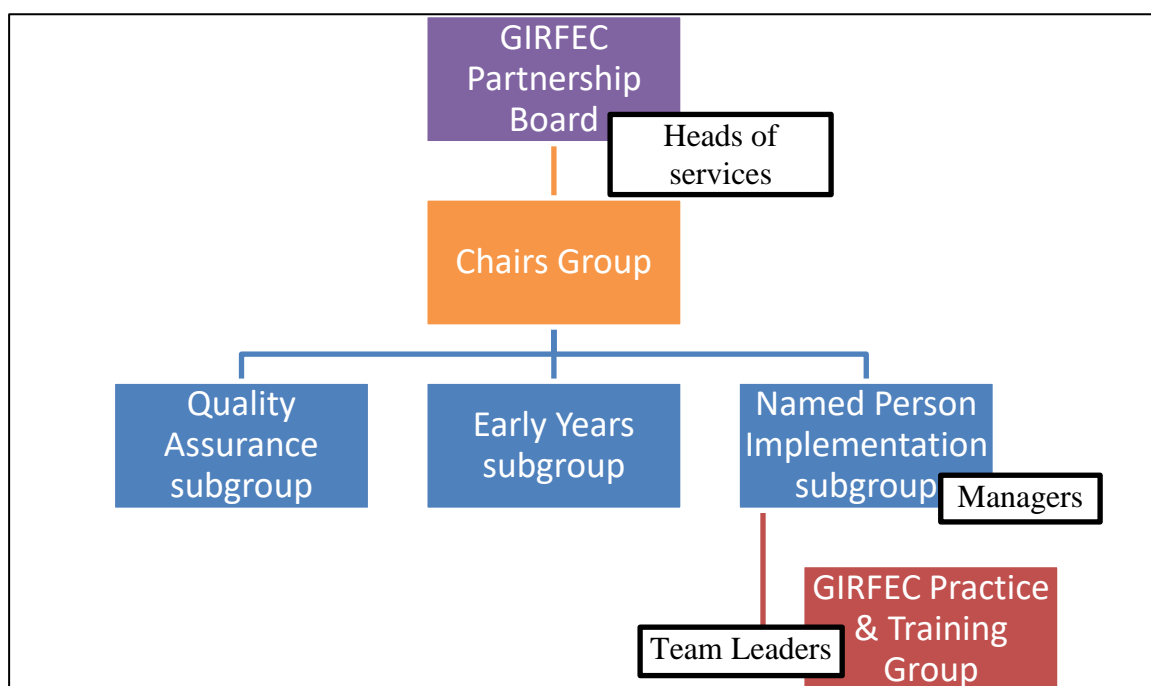
'Communicating' work relies on the school, Children and Families team, the health board and IT people in the latter two institutions to work together. The communication infrastructure thus implies working together. As a *service*, the Named Person is a sum of interactions between tasks that people in different settings perform but are not necessarily known to one another. And also, the Named Person

²⁰ "Red Book" is the informal name of the Personal Child Health Record (PCHR). It is usually given to parents/carers shortly or before the baby is born. It contains a list of basic minimum health checks for babies and children up to the age of 18 years. Midwives, Health Visitors and GP will use the book to record the child's weight and height, vaccinations and other important information. Families can also add information to the book, such as illness or any medicines the baby has taken. Source: <http://www.rcpch.ac.uk/PCHR> and <http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/pages/baby-reviews.aspx> (accessed on 27 August 2017).

service is institutionalised; it is not dependent on individual professionals (e.g. a Head Teacher could leave but the Named Person *service* will provide another Named *Person*). Before the realisation of the information system that can talk to other systems, the professionals had worked together to make the ‘communication structure’ work through meetings and referral forms that they had become familiar with under the banner of GIRFEC.

By showing the differences above I do not intend to suggest that the Named Person can only be a *service* or a *person*. Rather, I argue that the Named Person is both a *service* and a *person*, as the work of the *person* taking up the Named Person role is coordinated by the policies of the systems of *service*. This attempt to define and discuss the Named Person as a *service* and a *person* explicates the *ruling relations* in the sense that the policy gives the Named *Person* ‘power’, while in practice the professionals’ work as Named *Persons* are connected to the work of other professionals, managers and head of services, who together try to implement the policy.

There is a hierarchy in the structure of implementing the Named Person policy (see Figure 11). The relationship between structures shows how top-down control and power influences the Named *Person*’s work. The diagram is adapted from Ballian’s GIRFEC Structure Chart with the purpose of maintaining anonymity and focussing on the structure that is relevant to the Named Person policy. The Named Person implementation group is responsible to the GIRFEC Partnership Board, and it is the group to whom the GIRFEC Practice and Training group is accountable.



Note: for list of informants in these groups, see Chapter 3.

Figure 11. The structure of Ballian's GIRFEC implementation groups

6.3.2. *The Named Person service changes the implementation of GIRFEC*

Implementing the Named Person *service* in Ballian created changes in the way Ballian implemented GIRFEC. Matilda, Ballian's GIRFEC Development Officer, said that the GIRFEC Practice and Training Group was not new; it has been around for years but her new role made it active again. I took notes after our conversation and gained her consent retrospectively in order to use this excerpt in the thesis:

In a car going back to town Matilda and I chat a little. I ask how long the GIRFEC practice group has been going on, she says quite a number of years. When I inquire more about the group, Matilda says she doesn't know a great deal because she was not part of the group until early 2015 and could only refer to past minutes. Although, I remember some people said they were involved in the process of developing Ballian's GIRFEC Implementation Framework in 2010 – but that's before Matilda came. Now she wants to take forward a number of key things. Matilda says for this reason, she puts in the

agenda: discussing touchpoints (guidelines which focus on key aspects within GIRFEC); and GIRFEC leaflets about communicating the Named Person to the parents, young people and the public.

(after GIRFEC Practice and Training Group meeting, Informal Talk)

The GIRFEC Practice and Training Group had been going on for some years before Matilda came to lead the group and proposed focussing on communicating the Named Person *service* to the public. The group is part of the established structure of implementing GIRFEC in Ballian. So Matilda's call to action does not eliminate the structure, but instead changes the way the structure works to accommodate the Named Person agenda.

Most policies on inter-agency working focus on prescriptions and not on innovations (Warmington et al., 2004). In other words, these policies may influence for example, structural changes or the way sharing information should occur (see Scottish Government, 2008). This seemed to be the direction in which implementing the Named Person *service* in Ballian was going. For example, with the Locality Forum no longer in place, the opportunity to learn from the Forums and its benefits for inter-agency working – where innovations have had happened – may be missed.

The Revised Draft on Statutory Guidance that accompanies the legal duties in Parts 4 (Named Person), 5 and 18 (Section 96) of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 requires Local Authorities to implement the GIRFEC approach that supports coordination between families and professionals, and among professionals (Scottish Government, 2015). The Draft Guidance suggests the role of a Named *Person* is embedded in the working together among professionals, but also between families and professionals. Therefore, the implementation of the Named Person

service must take into account how the professionals' work as Named *Persons* is supported, to enact the policy *within* their professional remit and *for* the best interest of their service users.

I have shown in Chapter 4 and 5 how the Primary Schools Head Teachers, the Secondary School Deputy Head and Guidance Teachers, and the Children and Families team's work were connected and organised around the formal procedures of the Pupil Referral Group (PRG) and Locality Forum meetings. I argue that the Named Person *service* in Ballian is changing the way the Council implemented GIRFEC because:

1. Implementing the Named Person is changing relations between professionals and services within the already established inter-agency working environment.
2. For professionals who would become the Named *Persons*, there exist tensions between the role and their 'original' professional remit, as discussed earlier. Although the professional remit, such as of school teachers, already includes identifying welfare concerns (Vincent et al., 2010), but the identifying function is supported through teachers' engagement with inter-agency working procedures – and the Named Person *service* changes the procedures and centralised the role of the Named *Person*.
3. The Named Person role brings with it bureaucratic work in the shape of meetings and forms with substantial changes – to professionals in universal services (i.e. health and education). For example, changes from the PRGs and the Locality Forums to 'new' PRGs, and the use of new Wellbeing Concerns Forms to record concerns about children and young people (Appendix 10).

Academic literature on inter-agency working suggests that teachers who are involved in multi-agency working settings transform their professional identity, because engagement within the structure of multi-agency work is altering professionals' knowledge (Robinson et al., 2005). The social work literature indicates how 'informational turns' make professionals serve the system rather than the service users (Parton, 2008). Furthermore, the Named Person policy's promise of providing a single point of contact shifts relationships and systems to which the professional may lack the opportunity for professional learning. Teachers would lack the professional support they used to get from the Locality Forums, and instead of receiving support they now potentially have to 'coordinate [and] receive information'. Consequently they would be serving the system more (see Mellon, 2015), further limiting their time to exercise judgement and knowledge with the support of other professionals.

However, the introduction of the Named Person as a *service* can also be seen as synchronising current practice with the improvement of services in implementing GIRFEC, which requires changes in systems, practice and culture (Scottish Government, 2010b; Scottish Government Social Research, 2011). Changes in systems require adapting, amongst others, structures, policies, and procedures to enable better services (i.e. integrated practice). The following section discusses such changes.

6.4. Changing relations

Implementing the Named Person changes relations between professionals and services within the already established inter-agency working environment. This

section discusses the consequences of implementing the Named Person provision. Particularly, it analyses how the emphasis of Stage 2, or Pupil Referral Group (PRG) meetings, and the early intervention approach changed the ways in which Children and Families Team Leaders and Head/Guidance Teachers worked together. On the Named Person coordinating with other services:

The idea is to try and address any concerns early on to prevent them escalating. This is known as ‘early intervention’ and evidence suggests that it is better for children’s wellbeing, reduces the risk of long-term problems and also helps to avoid crisis situations (Scottish Government, 2014b, p2).

In a conversation with Helen (Children and Families Team Leader), she mentions the importance of the presence of a Children and Families Team Leader in Stage 2 meetings. Helen mentioned this during discussions of the importance of early intervention to prevent escalation of cases. This was reiterated in the GIRFEC training when Henry (Ballian’s Education division team member) said that in order for the Named *Person* to be able to function, they would need information (wellbeing concerns), access to services and that “the Children and Families Team Leader is key to Stage 2 meetings” (GIRFEC Training, Fieldnotes). The following excerpt from my interview with Helen further explicates changes in practice:

Helen: Yes, you’ll see I’ve noted ‘siblings’ underneath. The reason for that is so I can be discussing it with health visitors at naught to five [a Locality Forum meeting] then it could be raised at the primary, and actually look up a child at secondary school. So usually I note the siblings there, so that I try my hardest to remember that’s the information that I’ve got. But these all will be uploaded onto *Frameworki*. So just situation and update.

Harla: And the head teacher will be able to access them as well?

Helen: Yes. You know they're gonna have a drive on *SEEMiS*. They will be in there. So when we get that going and we get that over, they'll be in it...but actually Harla I'm confusing you, it won't look like that. It will look like this [Helen shows me the new form with the wellbeing wheel on it]. This is the new form that just came in. So starting next term I'm gonna be saying "right, start using this everybody". That'll be in the meeting discussion.

(Helen, Children and Families Team Leader, Interview)

There would be a drive that links information from *Frameworki* with *SEEMiS* (the school's database system) so that the Head Teacher is able to find information regarding children and families about which they have concerns. This fits well with the Council's new focus, which was on Stage 2 meetings as part of early intervention. As I mentioned in Chapter 5, chairing the Stage 2 meetings were head teachers (at primary school) or a Deputy Head Teacher (such as at Sisters' High School). Another change taking place is the use of a new form to record wellbeing concerns (see Appendix 10).

These changes were introduced by the Council and formally introduced to professionals in GIRFEC training. Along with the new ways of recording and accessing information came changes in the ways key people were connected. This created new responsibilities in working together. On one hand, bureaucracy is always there (e.g. working with forms and attending meetings) and on the other hand, through meetings such as Locality Forums, the professionals – the promoted teachers in particular – are getting more confident in doing their job of supporting the service users.

Changing practices results in changing relations. The following excerpt shows the different opinions Eleanor and Amber had of changes happening in Children and

Families team. This displays how changing relations between *key people* is unavoidable when changes take place in the structure of even one setting:

Eleanor chipped in as Amber read aloud my notes in which I wrote my inquiry: ‘why in the Named Person group meeting there was a discussion about whether the Children and Families team would be part of the Education Department at the Council.’ Overhearing this, Eleanor welcomes the idea for Children and Families team becoming part of the Education Department adding ‘so you can chair’ (the Secondary School Locality Forum). But Amber says she does not think the Children and Families team is going to be in Education, she says ‘I don’t think it would happen’, I ask ‘what do you mean?’ to she says ‘I don’t think we’re gonna move into school’. She prefers Social Work, gesturing a big circle with her hands.

(after Secondary School Locality Forum meeting, Informal Talk)

Although Locality Forum meetings traverse professional sectors, each professional is attached to their organisation, and, as discussed in earlier chapters, brings a part of their organisation to the meetings. When the two settings (i.e. a school and the Children and Families team) come together, the professionals maintain their membership to their home agency; a characteristic of multi-agency panel (Walker, 2008). Amber insists that Children and Families Team would stay in Social Work as she relates herself to that division. However, the excerpt shows more than ‘membership’ of the professionals. The exchange between Eleanor (the Deputy Head Teacher of Sisters High School and chair of the Secondary School Locality Forum) and Amber (Children and Families Team Leader) shows that a change in Amber’s team is expected to change her role in the Forum. Therefore, Eleanor remarks leave a question about the power of the Children and Families team in the Locality Forum.

6.4.1. Power relations: managing tensions between the role of a Named Person and the professional's remit

Power is entrenched in relationships between people in an organisation (Lawler and Bilson, 2010, p107). This also refers to power between people in different organisations. In my case, between the Head/Guidance Teachers in schools and the Team Leaders, Family Support Workers/Education Welfare Officer at Children and Families team. This not only considers hierarchical or vertical power, as would be the focus of intra-organisation analysis, but also horizontal power (inter-organisation). How the Wellbeing Concerns Forms were designed to be used represents the power of imposing an approach (i.e. GIRFEC wellbeing indicators) that a Named *Person* must follow. At a glance, it seems that the Named *Person* has the 'power' to record information about children and decide what actions are needed. The act of filling out forms and sharing information goes beyond the professional judgement of the Named *Person*; it requires interfaces with other professionals' information and judgement. The whole process shows how *ruling relations* work in the seemingly straightforward tasks of a Named *Person*.

To add to the complexity, although this thesis does not focus on Health Visitors, it is important to note that there are different ways of working for the Named Person in the health and education settings. For example, home visits allow Health Visitors to become a more targeted service, whereas teachers have a teaching responsibility and need to discern various other facets of information in their service.

As discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, professionals that worked together in the inter-agency working context at Ballian had established ways of working together effectively, through which they had established good personal relationships. The

work of a Named Person is an addition to the *Person's* professional remit. The following excerpt indicates this, and is particularly interesting because it shows how a dominant concern is shared with no consolation offered:

There is a comment from one of the health visitors stating her worry on how can health visitor become a Named Person since one health visitor could have five hundred cases. Henry (a staff member of the Education division at Ballian Council) responds by saying that health visitors rely on frontline workers telling them about concerns, agreeing to the notion that health visitors cannot do it themselves....Henry explains that a child minder can fill in the wellbeing [concerns] form and pass it on to the Named Person. Responding to this, one of the participants asks how possible it is, since the Named Person would manage concerns he/she receives from different people. To which Henry responds by saying he does not know how it is going to work but adds that child minders are going to be trained using the wellbeing concerns forms.

(GIRFEC Training, Fieldnotes)

The potential Named *Persons* are concerned with the practicalities of the Named *Person's* role. The Health Visitor raised the issue that the lack of health visitors and the high number of caseload would have an impact on their ability to take up the Named *Person's* role, suggesting it would be additional work *for* one person.

Another concern was about information sharing. An additional concern raised was the need to *interact with others*, i.e. working together.

The conversation in the excerpt suggests how in practice the design of the Named *Person service* directly affects the Named *Person's* work. The implementation of a procedure (i.e. the use of Wellbeing Concerns Form by child minders) shows a relation of 'ruling' over the Named *Person's* role as the receiver of the forms.

Receiving such forms is a new type of work for the health visitors. Despite that expressing concern about a child is not new for health visitors, the new way of receiving, storing and sharing information, as expected of the Named *Person*, will add challenges to their work. The following excerpt is from my fieldnotes, following an interview with Yvonne, a Health Visitor Team Manager; I wrote it down with her permission after I had just turned off the recording:

She is complaining about the policymakers who made this policy without looking at the facts (the low number of applicants for health visitors' posts)...Yvonne continues, telling me a lot of older health visitors quit their job because they already can't cope with technology of reporting, and so, when Named Person (policy) comes in, they (health visitors) cannot carry out the responsibility; it's like 'nail on the coffin' she says.

(after interviewing Yvonne, Health Visitor Team Manager, Informal Talk)

Yvonne's efforts to apply the procedures shows how health visitors' work is subject to changes required by people outside of their daily work (de Montigny, 1995; Prince, 1996). So as a person, they may struggle to put into practice what is it required of them. Going back to the changes required in light of the Named Person coming to Ballian, the teachers too, are likely to struggle as they focus on Stage 2 meetings, receive and share information, and use and make judgement calls based on new Wellbeing Concerns Forms.

The Named *Person*'s responsibility of recording and keeping information and acting upon it when necessary, is influenced by other professionals' assessing and recording wellbeing concerns and sharing the information. The work of other professionals is influenced by training regarding the use of Wellbeing Concern Forms and their professional remits. Named *Persons* are subject to competing roles. On the one hand

they are teachers with a responsibility for guidance or support towards their pupils.

On the other hand, they are workers participating in formal procedures to ensure support is provided whenever appropriate. The first is embedded in their day-to-day roles as teachers, whereas the second is new and requires adaptation and learning in order to make it part of their professional remit.

The interconnectedness of professionals' work that I have discussed above and in relation to the Named Person's role in Chapter 4 (for example on page 184) offers a cautionary analysis for operationalising the policy in practice. Recently, the Named Person scheme has been argued as lacking operational clarity (Jackson, 2016).

Furthermore, as a response to debates around 'surveillance' nature of the Named Person scheme (see for example Johnson, 2017; Waiton, 2016), the promoted teachers' work in accordance with their schools' procedures already involve elements of surveillance. For example, recording attendance and creating pastoral notes.

Following procedures as a government (i.e. Local Authority) agent while at the same time being a skilled professional (i.e. teacher) is inherently difficult when it comes to managing the tasks the two requires (Prince, 1996). My data provided information on the relations in which the teacher was caught up in and was part of. The following excerpt sheds light on the relations:

Henry (a staff member of the Education division at Ballian Council) was talking to Amber and Helen (the Children and Families Team Leaders). I was attentive to their conversation and so was Charles. They were talking about the likelihood that forums (the Primary and Secondary Locality Forums) would no longer exist, and there should be focus on Stage 2 meetings at schools, coordinated by the Named Person, as the language Henry used.

Henry mentioned the police report coming in and the IT development to support this had been progressing faster than the plan. He added that the role of Children and Families ('your team' as he directed it to Amber) was to support them. Amber and Helen were concerned about the practicalities of this for the teachers. The concern was continuously discussed as we were leaving the building. Then there was a talk of transition period, which was brought up in the meeting. This refers to the transition of the Children and Families team, which may end up under the Education structure.

(after Named Person Implementation Group meeting, Fieldnotes)

Teachers were not present in the discussion. However, the Head/Guidance Teacher, who would become the Named *Person*, is subject to the changes discussed by this Named Person implementation group. So, from the teacher's point of view, the discussion suggests how their work as Named Person is related to the work of the Ballian Council staff. *Ruling relations* directed attention to how external elements influence internal elements and their relations (see Smith, 2002). Teachers' work is influenced by other professionals they work with. In the context of inter-agency working, their work will therefore be influenced by the professionals they engage with in meetings or in the process of making referrals to other agencies. Since it is the duty of Local Authorities to implement the Named Person *service*, the Promoted Teacher's work as a Named *Person* is subject to the 'new' inter-agency working procedures that the Council will put in place.

6.5. The changes of and for Ballian's Children and Families team: my note before leaving the field

The Ballian Children's Services Service plan (Ballian Council, 2015) says that the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 brings legislative changes and

considers the Named Person as part of an additional duty, due to the legislative changes that the Council need to implement in the midst of reduced budget on children's services. This will restructure the Children and Families team. At the beginning of July 2015, Matilda confirmed that the Service Review was to be carried out throughout the Council; the Children and Families team had the review in October 2015. I wrote this down with her permission after I had just turned off the recording:

Matilda says that service review is done because the council needs to save money. The tension among staff is because they can either lose their job or need to apply for their current job. What the council can do is to find another post for those who can no longer keep their current position. So the service review is not a routine activity, such as annually, as I had thought.

(after interviewing Matilda, Informal Talk)

In the Service Plan document, the review is to be done to see whether the services are “fit for purpose and meet the current challenges/legislative changes about Getting It Right For Every Child” (Ballian's Children Services Service Plan 2014/15, 15/16). Also, the Plan mentions the Act as a strategic driver of changes in management and delivery of Ballian's children services. Whether the review would be conducted because of the financial pressure, the Act or both is not of interest to this analysis. However, taking it into context gave new perspective on what other issues the Council was facing when they were implementing the Named Person *service*. Tracing operational actions, I observed the following key moments:

1. GIRFEC training for the Named Person and Lead Professionals;

2. Ballian appointed a GIRFEC Development Officer (Matilda) to oversee the implementation of the Named Person;
3. Wellbeing Concerns Forms were introduced to members of Locality Forums and participants of GIRFEC training;
4. The early intervention agenda is focussing on Stage 2 meetings;
5. Access to *Frameworki* will be provided for the Named *Person*.

As raised in the GIRFEC training and also drawing from my observations during the PRG meetings at Sisters High School and interviews with Amber and Helen, the Named *Person*'s role involve a great deal of administrative work. The following excerpt shows the importance of having an admin worker in a meeting, and how it affects a Children and Families Team Leader's work:

In the car with Amber, she mentioned the problem of an Admin (person) not being available in the Stage 2 meetings (she reiterated what she mentioned at the meeting and had also mentioned in another meeting). She said that Helen took all the minutes, and then for her, she had this headphone so if someone didn't show up in the meeting, she would get an update from them via phone while typing that person's comments straight away, then circulate it to get others to comment.

(after Named Person Implementation Group meeting, Informal Talk)

The excerpt shows how Amber was concerned about the practicalities of managing meetings. What she highlighted is the importance of administrative role for Stage 2 meetings. In that excerpt, Amber (and Helen) took the role and were preoccupied by the system of information recording and keeping. The minutes are a means to communicate information, where information is shared and kept, and where actions are decided upon. From Amber's perspective, they will be generated into evaluation

reports of the meetings and forums as *key structures* of GIRFEC intervention. Earlier discussion saw how professionals are concerned about the practicalities of the Named Person's role. The following excerpt brings to light the practical challenges of supporting the Named *Person*:

Helen: So we had to look at why in a year health visitors hadn't referred them (children who are referred to Primary School Locality Forums). So the decision was made that we would go and meet health visitors at health centre. Spoke to them and spoke through GIRFEC stages (of intervention), and...and they were fine about that and it was supported by their line manager at that time.

Harla: Okay.

Helen: It's not been the easiest of meetings to arrange.

Harla: Why is that?

Helen: Well...they gave us times that they would be available and I contacted all partner agencies. So we have [naming voluntary sectors in Ballian] are there. So what we've got round the table are services that work naught to five. And it's really at this moment, sharing information and see where we can go. So it might be we discuss a family and might be...as a problem. We're trying to see at universal services when it's at that level. The health visitors gave us some dates and...we put all the dates in the diary, and then they contacted us to say they had a clinic, we couldn't do that day. So we move them to another date and we reschedule them all and that was great and then contacted us to say there wasn't a room down there, so we had them here.

(Helen, Children and Families Team Leader, Interview)

This excerpt illustrates the Children and Families Team Leader's attempts to re-focus their practice to the early intervention idea of both GIRFEC and the Named Person. Helen discussed her difficulty in arranging the Naught to Five Locality Forum

meetings. Helen had to manage problems around date and location for the meeting. In addition, she had to explain to the health visitors about Ballian GIRFEC's "stages of intervention". This practical work shows that Ballian's focus on GIRFEC's early intervention is also about informing future Named *Persons* (the health visitors) about the Council's formal procedure of GIRFEC implementation. Thus, similar to Children and Families team's role in Locality Forums (Chapter 4), Helen's role in the Naught to Five Forum would likely involve making sure Ballian's GIRFEC Implementation Framework is in place. I perceive that one of the challenges for the Naught to Five Forum in the future is the intersecting roles between the Named *Person* (health visitors) and the Children and Families Team Leaders.

Chapters 4 and 5 also show how the importance of Children and Families team being at the Stage 2 meetings is promising support for the Named *Person*'s role, and should not be temporary support. GIRFEC aims to reduce meetings and procedures for service users (Scottish Government, 2005). However, the 'reduction' is not reflected on the Named *Person service* because the Children and Families' Team Leader gives the professional support throughout the meeting. In addition, as the Team Leaders would be in close relations to following the Council's focus on Stage 2 interventions, the bureaucratic work that is likely to involve administrative work will 'move' to them.

Previous sections have also discussed how the work of soon-to-be Named *Person* (the promoted teachers) and Children and Families Team Leaders are interconnected; again, behind the Named *Person* as 'a single point of contact' there are a myriad of working relations that enable one person to perform the role of a Named *Person*. As discussed earlier in this chapter and Chapter 5, one significant enabler is that

engagement with other professionals in Locality Forum meetings has made the promoted teachers more confident in their job. Bureaucratic work which involves meetings and forms are likely to remain as part of children's services. Nevertheless, participation in this *ruling relations* has also benefitted the promoted teachers' professional learning.

The Introduction to this chapter notes that the Revised Draft Statutory Guidance suggests that the nature of the Named *Person*'s role is integrated into what currently works in practice. In the context of inter-agency working practices, the current practice of professionals working together was promising for the implementation of the Named Person policy. However, this also means taking on board problems that occurred in 'practice', and potential tensions due to changes that will soon take place. For that reason, writing 'integrating into current practice' into the policy text, or suggesting 'doing what they have always been doing', must take into account the complexities of the Named *Person*'s role. Integration is never easy because there is no single prescription on how it should be done (Davis and Smith, 2012; Hudson, 2010). Moreover, integration requires formal actions and clear structures (Hallett and Birchall, 1992; Percy-Smith, 2005), and thus potentially changing the 'current practice'.

The Named Person *service* echoes the policy theme in which there needs to be specific people with responsibility for delivering better services (Davis and Smith, 2012). That is how Ballian had been working in their inter-agency context. However, the introduction of the Named Person policy has and will continue to change the ways of their good practice. The analysis worryingly brings to light the fact that the work of a Named *Person* seemingly relies upon 'information' rather than 'action'.

The worry is not only due to what was observed, but also due to the ways the Scottish Government guidelines framed the Named Person functions. If a Named *Person* is ‘available if required’ (Scottish Government, 2014a). Yet what *is* available is a person working in delivering universal services to more than one child, trained for their profession yet as the Named *Person* s/he is also expected to communicate and deliberate on behalf of the child, and may or may not be the one to take action in addressing the child’s specific needs or concerns.

6.6. Conclusion

For professionals who would become the Named Person, there is a tension between the role of Named Person and their professional remit. The Scottish Government (2014b) suggests that much of the role of Named Person is already part of their day-to-day work as a professional. The coordinating role is expected from a professional (such as Maureen) who works for the purpose of seeking information and support, and not to coordinate.

Building upon analysis of relationships between professionals in the context of working together and on how inter-agency working is organised, this chapter has shown that the introduction of the Named Person *service* is potentially changing relations between settings and people. This is due to changes that are underway, which affect the way professionals work together. The changes are made complicated by concerns from professionals, soon-to-be the Named Persons and the way the Council has gradually supported the professionals. Yet this took place in a situation where GIRFEC’s implementation ‘required changes’ itself, as it had been

found to be challenging due to inter-professional culture and different ways of working, as discussed in the previous chapter.

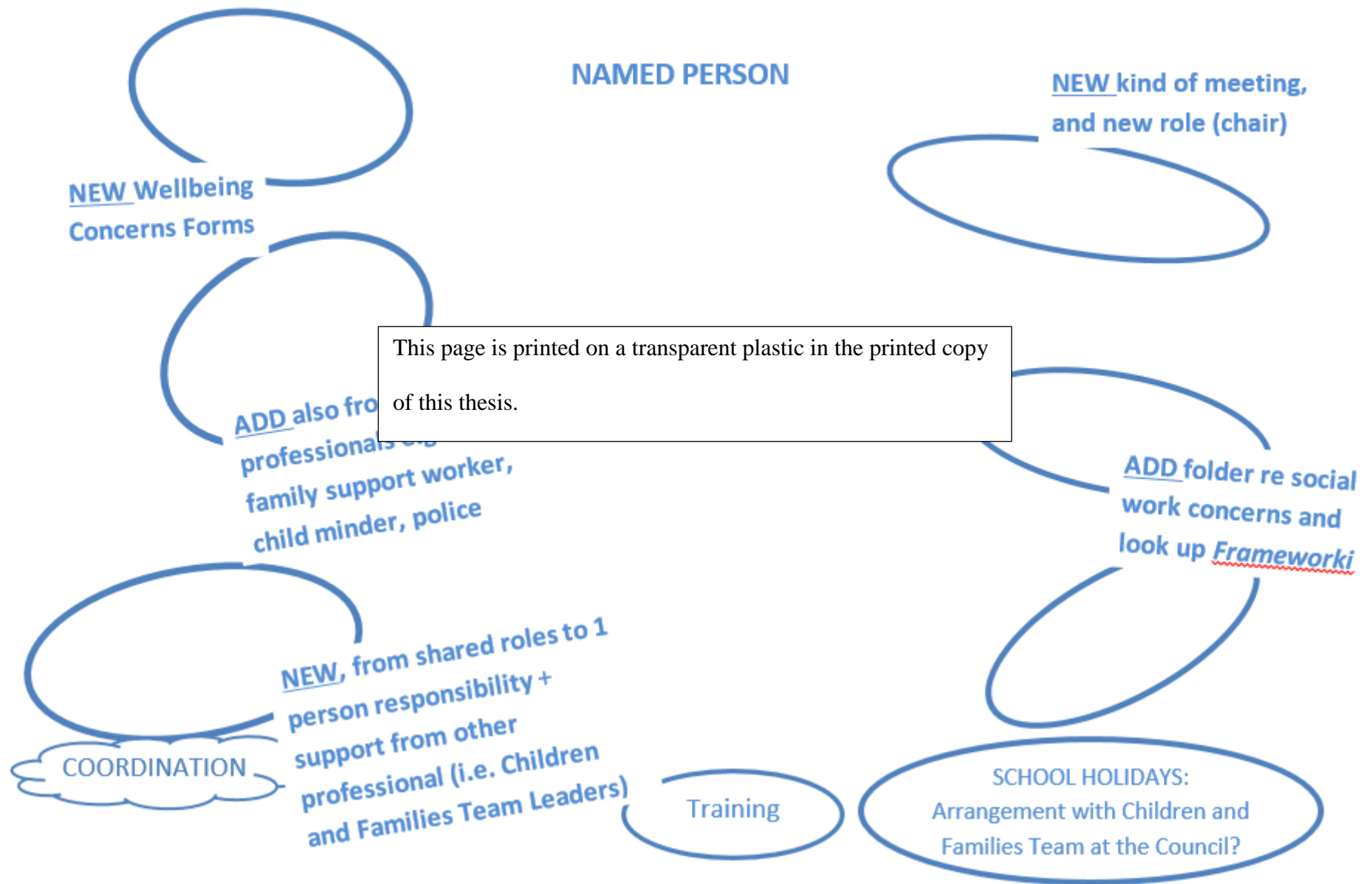
The Named Person implementation in Ballian was built upon existing mechanisms that had enabled people who had been working together to continue working together despite the fact that there were changes, i.e. in the way meetings were organised and how new forms (Appendix 10) were introduced. One of the changes, which was to bring Children and Families team leaders closer to the Named *Persons*, may provide support for undertaking the role, especially in sharing information and managing uncertainties in their own knowledge and judgement.

In relation to GIRFEC's intention to 'minimise bureaucracy' (see Chapter 2, page 60), Ballian's focus on 'early intervention' and, therefore, focus on Pupil Referral Group meetings instead of Locality Forum meetings, shifted bureaucracy from the Forum to Children and Families team. As PRG has taken place, no Locality Forum meetings could be perceived as 'less' bureaucracy as teachers will not need to make formal referral to the Forum. However, it puts emphasis on the Children and Family Team Leaders who will attend and provide information for the PRGs. This 'move' brings the Team Leaders closer to the promoted teachers who chair the PRGs.

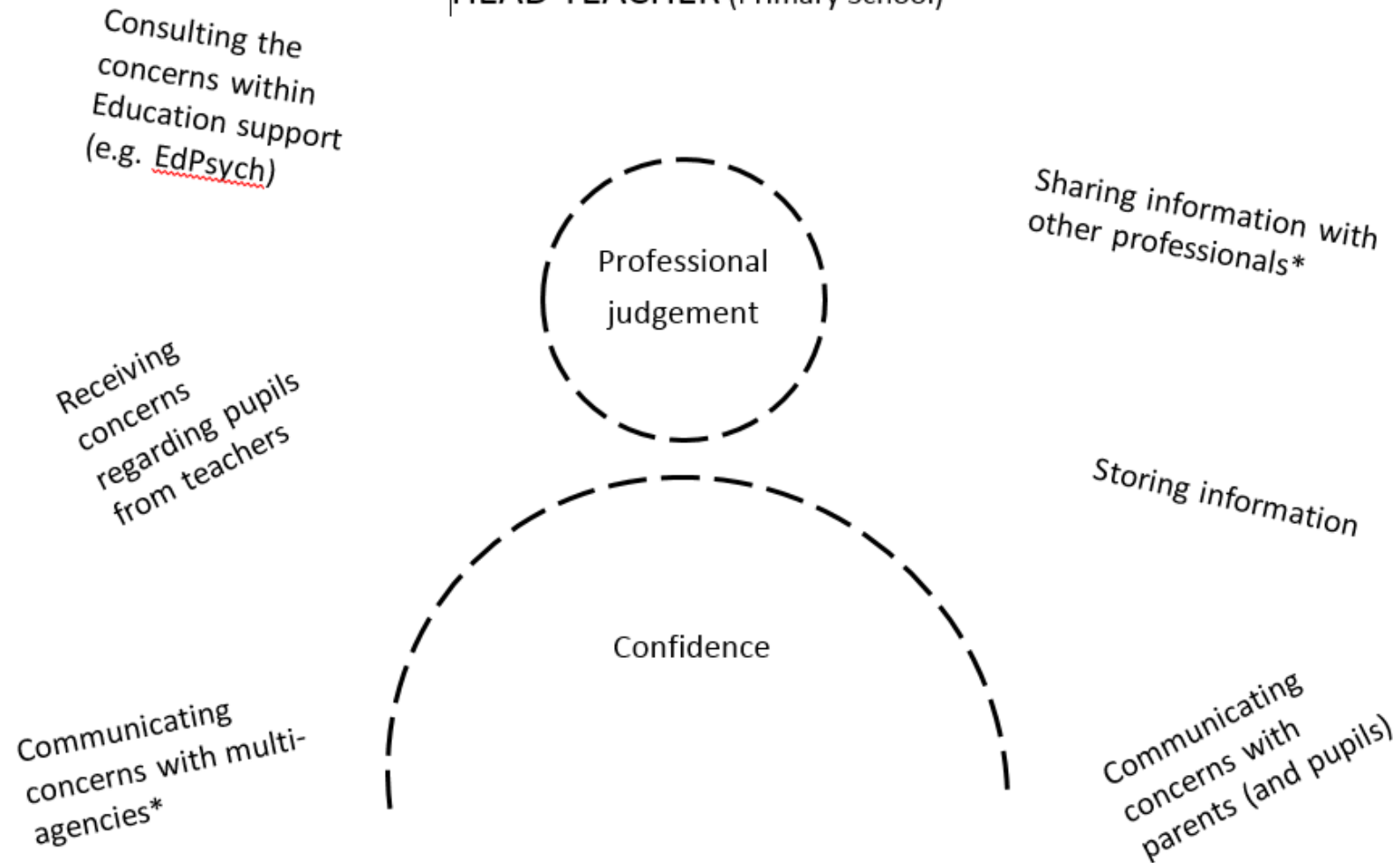
Extending this change of relationship towards information sharing in light of the Named Person policy implementation, the change brings the Council, who holds duty to implement the Named Person *service*, closer to the teachers, the *persons* who are going to take up the role of the Named Person. This finding has been missed by the debate around the Named Person (e.g. Mellon, 2015).

The Named *Person* is the focal point of contact for children, families and agencies; she/he is to address concerns about excessive bureaucracy, and ineffective and untimely services (Scottish Government, 2014a). However, placing a professional in between children, families and agencies with functions that used to be (and are still) shared among other professionals, and then placing that professional in the myriad of relations that are coordinated through meetings and forms, runs the risk of ineffective and inappropriate support.

This chapter concludes with two summary diagrams below. They visually summarise how a professional's work, in this example a Primary School Head Teacher, is related to the role of a Named *Person*. The transparent layer marks the teacher's actions which are in line with the Named Person's roles and adds the roles that are 'new' to them. The teacher/person is drawn with perforated lines to symbolise that teachers use their professional judgement and confidence as they engage in the inter-agency working procedures. The teacher's professional judgement and confidence are also affected by their interactions with other professionals. Therefore, the role of a Named Person is not only changing teachers' structural or procedural work but, also their professional learning experience.



HEAD TEACHER (Primary School)



*depending on level of concerns

Chapter 7 – Conclusion

7.1. Introduction

The aim of my research was to explore how professionals work together, for the purpose of understanding the processes of inter-agency working in Scotland's children's services. Within the context of *Getting it right for every child* (GIRFEC) implementation, I set out to do my research in Ballian Local Authority in Scotland. Focussing on the working relationship between professionals at the Children and Families team in Ballian Council and the schools, I sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What does inter-agency working look like within the institutional relations of GIRFEC implementation?
2. What do Named Persons do when they work together with other professionals in implementing GIRFEC?

Using observations, interviews and document analysis as methods to explore my research questions, I considered the complex processes of 'information sharing' and 'multi-agency meetings'. Guided by tenets of *Institutional Ethnography*, I carried out observations in meetings and conducted interviews and informal talks with the professionals involved. I further considered the relevant documents at local and national levels, on their contributions to inter-agency working. Altogether, these endeavours gave me an in-depth understanding of the complex processes of inter-agency working in children's services at one Scottish Local Authority.

This last chapter provides a review of my research findings. I begin with summarising the answers to my research questions, and then continue with my

reflections on using Institutional Ethnography in researching a changing policy process. The chapter then considers the implications of the answers to my research questions for GIRFEC and Named Person policies. The chapter continues with my exploration of the conceptual implications of inter-agency working, and closes with some notes of consideration for future research.

7.2. Answers to my research questions

Chapter 4, 5 and 6 have discussed the research findings and, therefore, answered my research questions in depth. In this section I will organise the findings to address both research questions.

7.2.1. Research question #1: What does inter-agency working look like within the institutional relations of GIRFEC implementation?

Inter-agency working happens when information travels. There were sets of activities that made up inter-agency working and it began when a professional ‘made’ information and then brought it to inter-agency working. In the Education sector, the information became identified when teachers’ concerns about pupils became their ‘accounts’ of them. The accounts were then shared with professionals from other agencies, primarily with the Children and Families team at the Ballian Council, and so exchanges of information took place. These exchanges had a two-step process of referral and then meetings. First, there was the teachers’ referral to the Pupil Referral Group (PRG) or Locality Forum. Second, in the PRG or Locality Forum meetings the accounts of teachers and other professionals who had information regarding the children/families were then objectified as cases in the meetings’ agenda, in order for actions of support to be taken. As teachers needed more information to understand pupils’ behaviour, they interacted with other professionals in a coordinated way.

The formal procedures of information sharing involved the above two steps (making referral and then exchanging information in meetings). In addition there was input from other professionals and also from members of administrative staff who used computer database systems that filtered ‘information’. Understanding the ways in which information about children and young people was attained, stored, shared, and discussed in Locality Forum meetings, helped me to identify the *key people* who make inter-agency working actually work. They are: Head Teachers (for primary school), Deputy Head Teachers and Guidance Teachers (for secondary school), members of administrative staff of the Children and Families team, the teacher who played the administrative role in the management of the Secondary School Locality Forum meetings and the Children and Families Team Leaders and members (i.e. Family Support Workers and Education Welfare Officer). Observing the *key people* demonstrated intersecting roles of information processes. These included the ways in which they processed information within their own setting (school or Children and Families team), their differing use of language when they met with professionals from different organisations, as well as coordination through formal procedures involving meetings and referral forms. Professionals’ power over information is operating within bureaucracies that connect the agencies/authorities.

Furthermore, through the sharing of information between professionals, the children’s accounts and the action points arrived at were influenced by different professionals’ judgements. In such information sharing, what was regarded as ‘information’ was not only ‘facts’ (e.g. pupils’ behaviours, health diagnosis), but also professional judgements. Professionals from the two settings, namely the schools and Children and Family Team had different remits and training background. When

teachers came to work together with other professionals, teachers had often exhausted internal school support, so that while they were sharing information with other professionals (e.g. in meetings) they were also interrogating their own judgements. However, when a professional whose information and judgement was desired did not attend the meeting, this could cause a barrier to a case or an extra task for the chair of the meeting.

How the key people's work is connected reveals barriers and enablers for inter-agency working. The interrogation of judgements in meetings was taking place as the Children and Families team, who were equipped with GIRFEC language and its policies, applied them in such meetings to make sure the formal GIRFEC implementation procedures were in place. This procedural knowledge difference made the Children and Families team members' presence paramount to PRG or Locality Forums' meetings. Understandably, language such as the 'stages of intervention' (of Ballian's GIRFEC implementation framework) that the team members used in the meetings was not the everyday language of other professionals. Another difference in the practices of each setting, the School and the Children and Families team, is their database systems. The two databases were not the same and not compatible.

This research has recognised certain challenges for inter-agency working as suggested in the literature: inter-professional differences in practices and paradigms, and relationships between professionals. These are challenges that focus on the professionals. However, my research also addressed the 'institutional system', which brings into view the different work procedures and computer database systems inside organisations and how together they complicate the ways professionals work

together. Locality Forums, as the space for working together, facilitate power to be expressed through the Forums' formal procedures (of meetings and making referrals).

The mechanisms for implementing GIRFEC can be traced structurally within the organisation; they were found in the organisation's public/private documents and website, in meeting agendas, and discussed or mentioned in meetings. Because they involve different kinds of relationships between people, structures and people across structures, there is a coordination and interdependency within the relationships.

In explicating inter-agency working, I found how GIRFEC implementation is complex in practice. The literature notes that professionals have different underlying perspectives about children and young people (Anning et al., 2010). Studies on integrated services or partnership working often include this as a barrier for professionals when working together (e.g. Hudson, 2007). However, in my research when these professionals came to work together, such as in the Locality Forum meetings, they had an opportunity to be reflexive and explore the uncertainties that led them to work together with other professionals. The Locality Forum meetings were useful for venting, making such avenues serve a different purpose from the policy intended. Ballian's policy documents noted the meetings as providing a 'safety net' for children, but the professionals' venting reflected more of a 'safety valve'. As teachers attended multi-agency meetings and looked for support and advice, they were also channelling their frustration.

Meetings and Forms are mechanisms that coordinate professionals' work. The Locality Forum meetings, as organised activities, are the place where different

professionals sit together to discuss concerns about children's wellbeing, and to decide whether additional support is needed. This means the participants have different roles: who brings cases to discuss, who takes away action points, who contributes their expertise and who contributes information regarding the child or family. The meetings formalised information sharing by the professionals. The school teachers who referred their pupils to Locality Forum meetings 'activated' the meetings as one of the formal mechanisms of inter-agency working in Ballian's children's services. The teachers had exhausted possible support from their school: a universal service. The referrals had been in accordance with the Ballian's GIRFEC framework and, therefore, justified the teachers and other professionals coming together in the Locality Forum meetings. Although the meetings did not necessarily result in more support for children and families, teachers still had to go back to them and report the 'result' of the meetings. In addition, the teachers may also need to contact other professionals who did not come to the meetings. In the Locality Forum meetings, power was expressed horizontally – between teachers and other professionals. As Foucault noted, power can be decentred, operating through social relations (see chapter 2).

Referral Forms, and other Forms that were used to discuss children and young people in meetings that I observed, were formalising the work procedures of inter-agency working. Such formalisation has been long argued as problematic (Munro, 2005) in a child protection context because it takes professionals away from attending to their service users. The Forms have a performative function (Thompson, 2016), which means they are intended to lead to action and also to be a lens that enables us to understand how professionals' work is organised (Smith, 1990a). The new Wellbeing

Concerns Form was introduced as part of implementing the Named Person policy; bringing changes to teachers' practice of recording and sharing concerns, as well as to the practices of other professionals involved. This introduction showed a *ruling relation* – because it organised teachers' concerns into formal procedures that made use of texts and language of wellbeing indicators. Professionals' judgement was incorporated in information about children and families; therefore, the way teachers interrogated their judgements would also change. As the Named *Person*, they would be responsible for receiving the Forms that textually mediated concerns made by other professionals. Receiving and recording would involve the use of different computerised database systems and other professionals in other settings (in particular, the Children and Families team), a process which may prove to be challenging for (even) experienced teachers such as those at promoted posts.

7.2.2. Research question #2: What do Named Persons do when they work together with other professionals in implementing GIRFEC?

Scottish Government policies on the Named Person have insisted that the Named *Person* will likely be doing what they have already been doing within their professional remit (e.g. Scottish Government, 2012a, 2014b), but they have not been clear about naming which roles the Named *Person* have already been doing. My thesis has clarified the roles for key school professionals in one Local Authority.

The promoted teachers will still be working with other agencies when a wellbeing concern requires additional information or support beyond the school's ability. They will still be working closely with the Children and Families team in early intervention (Stage 2) procedures. For the teachers, changes in their roles will include using the new Wellbeing Concerns Form to record concerns about pupils,

which may include receiving such forms from other professionals. Particularly for primary school teachers who were new to Pupil Referral Group (PRG) meetings, they will need to get used to chairing and coordinating professionals in the meetings. Engagement with information supplied by the Children and Families team, with access to *Frameworki*, is also a new development that the teachers need to take in. These changes also impact the Children and Families team, especially the Team Leaders. Their communication with the promoted teachers will be more intense as the Team Leaders are likely to attend the PRG meetings and will be more informed about the Council's GIRFEC framework than the teachers. In addition, the Team Leaders are the teachers' link with the Council, so they will be communicating to the teachers the changes that the Named Person *service* brings to ensure the service is being implemented effectively.

The Named *Person* participates in *ruling relations* of inter-agency working under GIRFEC implementation framework. As I mentioned in Chapter 3 of this thesis, the Named Person was not yet identified when I did my fieldwork. Nevertheless, as I focussed on the Education sector, I directed my attention to the promoted teachers with an assumption that they would be the Named *Persons*. I have found that in the context of inter-agency working, the work of these teachers was connected to the work of other professionals, particularly to the Children and Families team.

The Named Person is located in the universal services. In Chapter 2, when discussing the social work literature, I pointed out that the universal services, such as school and health services, have been asked to identify risk and needs related to children and young people's wellbeing. I set out to do my research in the context of GIRFEC implementation and have found that working with other professionals has allowed

teachers to relate their work with children's wider wellbeing and social issues (Vincent et al., 2010). For example, teachers who assume there are family problems can make referrals to the Locality Forum. However, I have discussed in Chapter 2 how frontline professionals struggle with concepts such as *risk*, *needs* and *wellbeing* (see for example Coles et al., 2016; Jenkins and Palmer, 2012) and in my research, when such language was formalised in 'Stages of Interventions', the issue was that it is not the everyday language of professionals other than the Children and Families team of the Ballian Council. That teachers' relate their work to wider wellbeing issues became apparent when they had provided support but the pupil's behaviour had not changed. They needed more information about the pupil/family and more support from other professionals and this is what the Locality Forums provided.

If the Named Person implementation means that promoted teachers continue working with other professionals in the existing wider working mechanism, I see the benefit of the *service*. In addition, this makes relevant what the Scottish Government has been suggesting that 'teachers [and health visitors] have been doing the Named Person's role anyway' (Scottish Government, 2012a). Thus I recommend the Scottish Government makes this relevancy much clearer by providing examples, drawn from the working of local authorities' multi-agency or partnership practices.

However, my research also gives a cautionary analysis for the Named Person *service*. Implementing the Named Person policy might actually reduce multi-agency working mechanisms and focus on inter-agency working between Children and Families team and the schools, particularly between Children and Families Team Leaders and the Named *Person* – under the premise of 'early intervention'. These changes have changed relationships. As the changes took place, they revealed and magnified power

relations in the relationships between the school teachers (the future Named *Persons*) and the Children and Families team. Named *Persons*' power over information will still operate in compliance with their organisations' system of processing information (as discussed in Chapter 4). This adds to the complexity of inter-agency work in that each agency has its own system, procedures and remits. Therefore, as the Named Person *service* relies on the working of bureaucracies, in which the professionals are participating in, power remains decentred. It is operating within new work mechanisms that connect the Named Person and Children and Families Team in the processes of information sharing.

GIRFEC policy documents, both at the local and national level, support the idea of finding common language, and yet literature has noted that the language of wellbeing as the basis of GIRFEC is problematic (Coles et al., 2016; Stoddart, 2015). The UK Supreme Court decision against the information sharing provision of the Named Person scheme provides an opportunity to discuss negotiating information sharing and professional judgements. The significance of the Supreme Court's decision, for this research, is that it concurs with the findings that the process of information sharing is complex. My research sheds light on the complex practicalities of such information sharing practices and more, in terms of changing the roles of professionals in information sharing processes as they carry out the Named Person role.

Unfortunately, instead of appreciating the Named *Person as professionals* with expertise and experience, the current debate surrounding the Named Person policy has created an assumption that the Named Persons are the 'state's guardians' (see for example Waiton, 2016; Johnson, 2017) who are ready to interfere with family life

whenever they have the chance. This idea, which is preserved by the flaws in the policy's design (see *The Christian Institute and others v The Lord Advocate* [2016] UKSC 51), casts a shadow for a more urgent discussion, which is to create a supportive space for the future Named *Persons* to do their job.

Building upon analysis of relationships between professionals in the context of working together and on how inter-agency working is organised, the introduction of the Named Person *service* is potentially changing relations between settings and people. This is due to changes that are underway, which affect the way professionals work together. In the midst of the changes I recorded the professionals' (soon-to-be Named *Persons*) concerns over the changes, and the way the Council has gradually supported the professionals. For example, the promoted teachers will be enabled to read some information on *Frameworki*.

The implementation of the Named Person policy in Ballian was built upon existing mechanisms that had enabled people who had been working together to continue working together despite the fact that there were changes, i.e. in the way meetings were organised and how new forms were introduced. The Named *Person* as the focal point of contact for children, families and agencies is to address concerns about excessive bureaucracy, and ineffective and untimely services (Scottish Government, 2014a). However, placing a professional in between children, families and agencies with functions that used to be (and are still) shared among other professionals, and then placing that professional in the myriad of relations that are coordinated through meetings and forms, runs the risk of ineffective and inappropriate support.

The changes in the way professionals worked together in Ballian have created tensions between the promoted teachers' confidence in doing their job and structural change in the inter-agency working mechanisms (e.g. referral system and focus on PRG meetings). It seems that the Named Person policy does not bring confidence to the promoted teachers because it changes practice. Instead, what was offered was bureaucratic support from the Children and Families team around the role of Named Person, such as the Children and Families Team Leaders coming to the PRG meetings. What Ballian Council had done under the frame of an 'early intervention' focus was to acknowledge that focussing intervention at the frontline means that the promoted teachers still need support to be confident. To provide this they brought people like the Children and Families Team, from whom the teachers could gain support and confidence, closer to the teachers.

I conclude that the Named Person is both a *person* and a *service*. The work of the person who takes up the Named Person's role is interconnected with the work of other professionals they engage with in the formal structure of GIRFEC implementation (see Chapter 6, page 268). My thesis has shown how the development of the Named Person policy in Ballian was in line with the Council's 'early intervention' agenda. This directed the support of the Children and Families team to the schools as a way of making sure the Children and Families Team Leaders would be part of the Pupil Referral Group meetings in schools.

The attempt to distinguish and contrast the Named Person as a *person* and *service* establishes again the power relations between policy and practice. In one sense, the policy gives the Named Person 'power' but in practice the professionals who work as Named *Persons* are connected to the work of other professionals and managers and

heads of services who together are trying to implement the policy. As Ballian's implementation plan for the Named Person policy has changed their inter-agency working mechanisms (such as no Locality Forum and focus on Pupil Referral Group), the changes have also disrupted the *ruling relations* that I had explicated.

7.3. Reflections from applying Institutional Ethnography in my research

Institutional Ethnography (IE) which seeks to discover coordinating activities from everyday frontline practice was useful in my research in two ways. First, it allowed me to spend time at meetings and talking to people and reading policy documents to find traces of 'coordination'. When words like "stages of intervention" or "referral" were mentioned, I found these were cues to look beyond what I observed, towards procedures and policy. Second, I was able to map visually how professionals' work was connected and then put layers on the 'map' as I moved to understand *ruling relations*. Ruling relations are found in the formal procedures of inter-agency working. It was the IE concept that was key to my research as it was a lens to help me make sense of the formal procedures that the professionals were engaged with. It also located objects, such as forms and computer databases in the working relationships between the professionals. It also informed Foucault's discussion on power as decentred and as operating through social relations (see Hearn, 2012). While at the same time revealing practices of power as operating through formal procedures (meetings and referral forms) – which reminds us of Weber's bureaucracy (see Clegg, 1994). I conclude that relations of power, as with the relationships among the professionals in the two settings of schools and the Children and Families team, are complex.

Each agency has its own system and procedures. Thus professionals at the front-line of inter-agency working must constantly confront, negotiate and navigate complex relations of power. Key people's control over information reflects Weber's idea of power as domination and the way they processed information (e.g. recording, sharing) exemplifies bureaucracy as formal procedures (see Hearn, 2012). How key people's work is inter-connected through procedures in Locality Forum meetings and information recording/sharing supports Foucault's idea of power being dispersed. Thus power is decentred and its operation can be seen not only in the formal procedures but also in the mundane and seemingly-informal routines of the key people. In applying the concept of *ruling relations* to reveal the interconnectedness of the key people's work, I connect with Foucault's idea of power to show how these professionals' routines of processing information are manifestations of power relations.

Interactions between people in inter-agency working cannot be understood only in terms of the bureaucracy in which the Locality Forum meetings are embedded. The meetings are a site which facilitates professionals' sharing of expertise and their capacity for reflexivity from the perspective of their individual experiences.

Meetings are places where professionals may empathise with and support each other ('safety valves'), thus exceeding but still contributing to the bureaucratic purposes of inter-agency working. Therefore, power is not simply hierarchical but contested and negotiated through social relations.

The working relationship between professionals acts as a conduit to help me understand inter-agency working processes. As these professionals are also working for organisations, applying IE in my research directed me to consider how

interactions between professionals are organised. When professionals from schools and Children and Families teams engage with procedures (such as attending meetings and sending referral forms), their interactions with one another shed light on the differences in their professional backgrounds, and most importantly, in the way their organisations work to exert influence on the process of inter-agency working.

However, I did not use IE as a totalising lens. I could not anchor it to the actions of certain professionals because the Named *Person* did not yet exist; instead, the Named *Person*'s role in the context of inter-agency working was shared between different professionals. Yet by remaining in the field, I used IE to trace the process of information recording and sharing and that 'tracing' led me to identify *key people* in the complex processes of the inter-agency working that I explored. As the mention of "Named Person" began to be prominent in the meetings which I observed, having this 'traced map' and the identified *key people* in mind helped me to grasp the Named Person in the context of GIRFEC implementation while at the same time advancing Institutional Ethnography in researching a dynamic policy process. Furthermore, seeing how the teachers participated in *ruling relations*, I perceived not only the structure of inter-agency working but also its meaning for the professionals' judgement and confidence.

I do not claim that my research followed a traditional path of IE. This is because of its *standpoint* paradigm. IE has a clear stance on what is meant by *standpoint*, which is from where the researcher directs the attention to explicate ruling relations (Smith, 2005). Much IE research makes this clear at the start but I was unable to do so. My research was undertaken in a changing policy context and as said earlier and elsewhere in this thesis, at first I could not identify the Named *Person*. Instead I

remained observant of the professionals who attended the Pupil Referral Group and Locality Forum meetings and narrowed my focus to two settings, schools and Children and Families team, as I began to see how professionals working in the two settings were connected. The ‘looking up’ to extra-local activities that have implications for frontline practice was done by tracing the policy documents on GIRFEC and Named Person at Ballian Council. It led me to other meetings with service managers and directors of services. In hindsight, as the nature of inter-agency working is dynamic, IE is useful in researching policy processes. Lastly, as studies on inter-agency working in the past have used theories such as activity theory and system/network theory, this thesis has shown that IE has the potential to help in understanding the complexities of inter-agency working from the perception of frontline practice.

7.4. Implications for policy and practice

In the process of writing up my thesis, I found myself frequently asking this question: *if, ‘knowing’ about a child or young person’s situation is what professionals aim to achieve when they work together with other professionals, why then are their activities of knowing preoccupied with meetings, filling out referral forms, and making sure the cases in the Locality Forum meetings meet the criteria of “Ballian’s Stages of Intervention”?*

So the question should be, why the Named Person policy is creating a new system that is putting pressure on the existing practices of members of administrative staff, Children and Families Team Leaders, and promoted teachers. Instead of pressure it should be allowing professionals to figure out the following two issues:

- How to make ‘knowing’, more effective and quicker, in line with the clear threshold set out in the (new) Named Person legislation and Data Protection Act, and within parameters of their own professional conduct.
- How to become professionals who can act confidently because as the Named *Persons* they are able to use their professional judgement with the support of other ‘key people’ and enabling technology.

As the policy direction of implementing the Named Person risks a continuing absence of children and other family members in discussions about them and their support allocations, my suggestion is that the Named Person could be used as an opportunity to involve children and families more in such discussions. What needs to be ensured is to have a system in which the Named *Person* is relieved from the bureaucratic processes of information receiving, collecting and sharing; instead they should be able to spend time with children/families to discuss the information and bridge communication with other professionals when the Named *Person* and children/families feel this is necessary.

Local Authorities have the duty to implement the Named Person *service* and my research has shown that in one Local Authority, one of the mechanisms that they will put in place is the use of wellbeing concerns form. I have discussed how the form poses as a challenge to the administrative role of Named Person. Another implication of this form is that by completing and sending it to the Named *Person*, professionals may draw more children into the institutional system that governs the Named Persons’ role. The wide-ranging scope of SHANARRI indicators is likely to encourage the action. Thus a balance needs to be struck between preventing children

who needs support to go unnoticed and implementing the Named Person *service*, in a way that serves the best interest of children and families.

The Named Person policy is an opportunity for children and families to be more involved in the partnership working to which GIRFEC aspires. The inter-agency working processes that I have explained in this thesis have put accounts of children at the centre. To this end, the processes echo the findings of earlier studies on school-based integrated services. For example, Tisdall and colleagues (2005) identified the importance of having one professional through which children and their families could maintain contact with the integrated services. In their study on school exclusions, Lloyds and colleagues (2001) found that inter-agency meetings, held within schools, were helpful in providing a child-centred and integrated service. However, I am not suggesting that children and families must attend all inter-agency meetings that discuss their concerns. Indeed, this would be contrary to GIRFEC's purpose of reducing the number of meetings, specifically, but also contrary to the benefit of partnership working, which is less duplication (see Hill, 2012). What I am suggesting, instead, is the Named *Person* is a single point of contact that makes sure children and families are more involved in the inter-agency working processes (e.g. referral to other service, inter-agency meetings) that discuss their needs and the support for them. My suggestion draws from my observation in Ballian and also from the Named Person's policy aim to move services closer to the frontline.

While GIRFEC policy suggests professionals need to work together to arrive at effective support and prevent children from falling through cracks in service processes, my research has shown an unintended intention of inter-agency working for the promoted teachers. The structure (i.e. Locality Forum meetings) that was

designed to discuss complex cases of children and their families and to get other professionals to support their service users when needed often became a ‘safety valve’ for them to discuss uncertainties faced in their services and to vent their frustration. By doing this the teachers were helped to be more confident in their job.

As I was completing my thesis, the Scottish Government published (20th June 2017) their amendments to the Named Person provisions in the 2014 Act, as a response to the UK Supreme Court judgment in 2016. The publications are ‘the Children and Young People (Information Sharing) (Scotland) Bill’ and its accompanying documents: policy memorandum, explanatory notes, financial memorandum and delegated powers memorandum. Due to the very recent issue of the publication, these documents were not included in my analysis. However, having since read them, I recommend that there needs to be a change in the way the Named Person policy will be implemented, to ensure children and other family members are involved. The documents have not addressed this recommendation. In addition, based on my research, the information processes are not neutral and, therefore, the information gathering and exchange are critical functions for the Named Person policy going forward.

7.5. Implications for literature and future research

7.5.1. Implications for the literature

My thesis contributes to the literature in a number of ways. First, the thesis contributes to exploring inter-agency working from frontline practice to institutional relations that shape the practice. By following the process of information sharing, I traced how accounts of children and families were recorded and how the different

computer database systems were connected with the professionals' information and the work of members of administrative staff. As 'more' information was required and more support for children was needed, professionals would engage in formalised working together that included multi-agency meetings and referral forms. Morrison (1996) notes that "information is power and sharing it symbolises some ceding of autonomy" (p130). My research adds another dimension to understanding 'power relations' by locating power within the working relationships in which professionals were engaged.

Second, the thesis contributes to the literature on 'social work' by addressing the issue of whether reducing prescribed procedures has been advocated in reviews on child protection (Munro, 2011). My thesis has shown that professionals' ability to make sound judgements regarding children's lives are supported by their engagement in multi-agency meetings and interaction with other professionals. GIRFEC and inter-agency working literature encourage the reduction of bureaucracy (e.g. Hill, 2012; Stradling and Alexander, 2012). However, in light of the changes that the Named Person policy has brought in Ballian, the risks of over-emphasis on reports/forms that the Named Person policy brings could potentially move the Named *Person* from being allowed to question their judgements into 'information worker' (Thompson, 2016). What I have shown is that there is a 'shift' in bureaucracy in that, as the work of supporting the Named *Person* with information from Children and Families team continues, the team (especially the Team Leaders) has taken up the task of introducing the new Wellbeing Concerns Forms to the professionals.

Third, the different database systems used in schools (*SEEMiS* and *OnTheButton*) and by the Children and Families team (*Frameworki*) were discussed in the thesis (Chapter 5 and 6) in order to understand the complexities of inter-agency working. My research has shown that technology can be both an enabler (see Davis et al., 2016) and a challenge (Munro, 2005) for the inter-professional information sharing. As enabler, it allows the professionals of the Pupil Referral Group and Locality Forum meetings to retrieve information from their organisational database system to then share with each other in the meetings. However, a close look at the way information was filtered and populated from the *Frameworki*, has suggested to me that for such technology to improve inter-agency working, the role of members of administrative staff is crucial because the information on the *Frameworki* connects the work that has been done by different professionals across services (e.g. police, education and social work).

The review on literature of inter-agency working argues that what actually happens in regard to professionals' learning process in inter-agency settings is under explored (Warmington et al., 2004). My research has contributed to addressing the issue by revealing how professionals' learning is embedded in the inter-agency working processes that both formalise information sharing and question professional judgements. Therefore, the research has given an empirical example for the argument that professionals need to learn from their previous experience and research about the contributing factors of inter-agency working (Hill, 2012, p273).

7.5.2. Recommendations for future research

My research did not include children and other family members' perspectives. As I have mentioned earlier, the Named Person policy could be an opportunity for inter-

agency working practices to involve children and families more actively. I also gave a cautionary note that such efforts should not be counterproductive by asking them to come to all meetings. Nevertheless, as Smith (2002) writes, “Inquiry is conceived overall as opening different windows based in how people are positioned in the institutional regime, each giving a different view of the terrain” (p30). My research would have had a different look if it had been done from the standpoint of children and families. While the rights of children, young persons and parents’ were argued as paramount in the UK Supreme Court decision, it would be useful for future research to direct the inquiry from the *standpoint* of children to understand how the services that they have received are organised. Such research may reveal different kinds of *ruling relations* and could explore power relations between service users and service providers.

My research focussed on the primary and secondary education sector of GIRFEC implementation. It was not about Health Visitors, but in Chapter 5 and 6 I included excerpts from Yvonne, a Health Visitor Team Manager who attended the Screening Group for non-offending children and young people. She told me two interesting things that I think would be useful for future research into the Named Person policy. First, regarding her work as a Health Visitor Team Manager, she noted that health visitors were already working together with other professionals (such as the Social Work Team at the Council) if they found wellbeing concerns regarding children that they visited. The other thing that she remarked on was the shortage of health visitors and that the ones remaining in the job had faced difficulties in coping with the changing technology system. Her view was that becoming the Named *Persons* would make their job even more difficult. Therefore, research that focusses on the health

sector would be very useful to understand how the controversial Named Person policy in Scotland has implications for the policy of health boards and the job of health visitors as frontline practitioners.

This thesis makes an original contribution to knowledge by unpacking the complexities of inter-agency working in children's services and by critically analysing how a policy changes the ways in which professionals work together. The thesis makes visible how professionals working together are coordinated through formal procedures that include referral forms and multi-agency meetings. In so doing, I extended the use of Institutional Ethnography to reveal the ways in which professional judgement and confidence influence and are influenced by the inter-agency working processes they engage in.

Policies for children and families that require changes in service delivery, in which inter-agency working is often encouraged, are ever-changing and in that situation the frontline professionals will keep delivering services to the service users. It is then paramount for us all (be it policymakers, frontline professionals, managers, academics) who *are* public service users to learn from the interconnectedness of the work of professionals in children services. Perhaps then each of us can contribute to making sure no child will slip through the cracks of children's services.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Timeline of important documents showing increased commitment for integrating children’s services in Scotland

Appendix 2 – GIRFEC National Practice Model

Appendix 3 – Route Map for Named Person in Single and Multi-Agency Support

Route Map for Lead Professional in Multi-Agency Support

Appendix 4 – Paragraph 19 of Part 4 Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 – Provision of Named Persons

Appendix 5 – Level 1 and 2 Ethics Form

Appendix 6 – Research Information Sheet and Consent Forms

Appendix 7 – An example of an interview schedule

Appendix 8 – Referral Form to Primary or Secondary Locality Forum

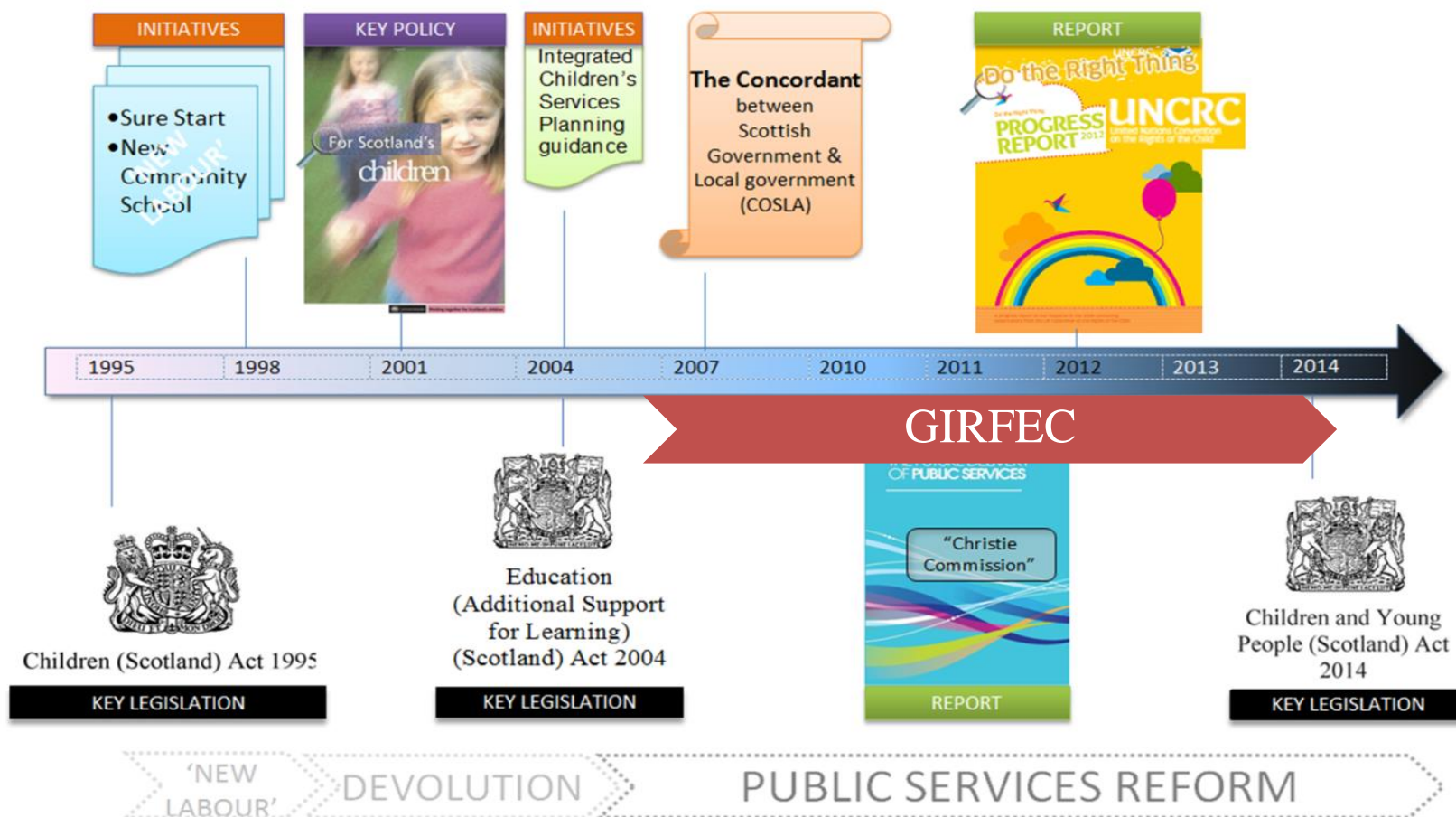
Appendix 9 – Referral Form to Children and Families

Appendix 10a – The Wellbeing Concerns Form

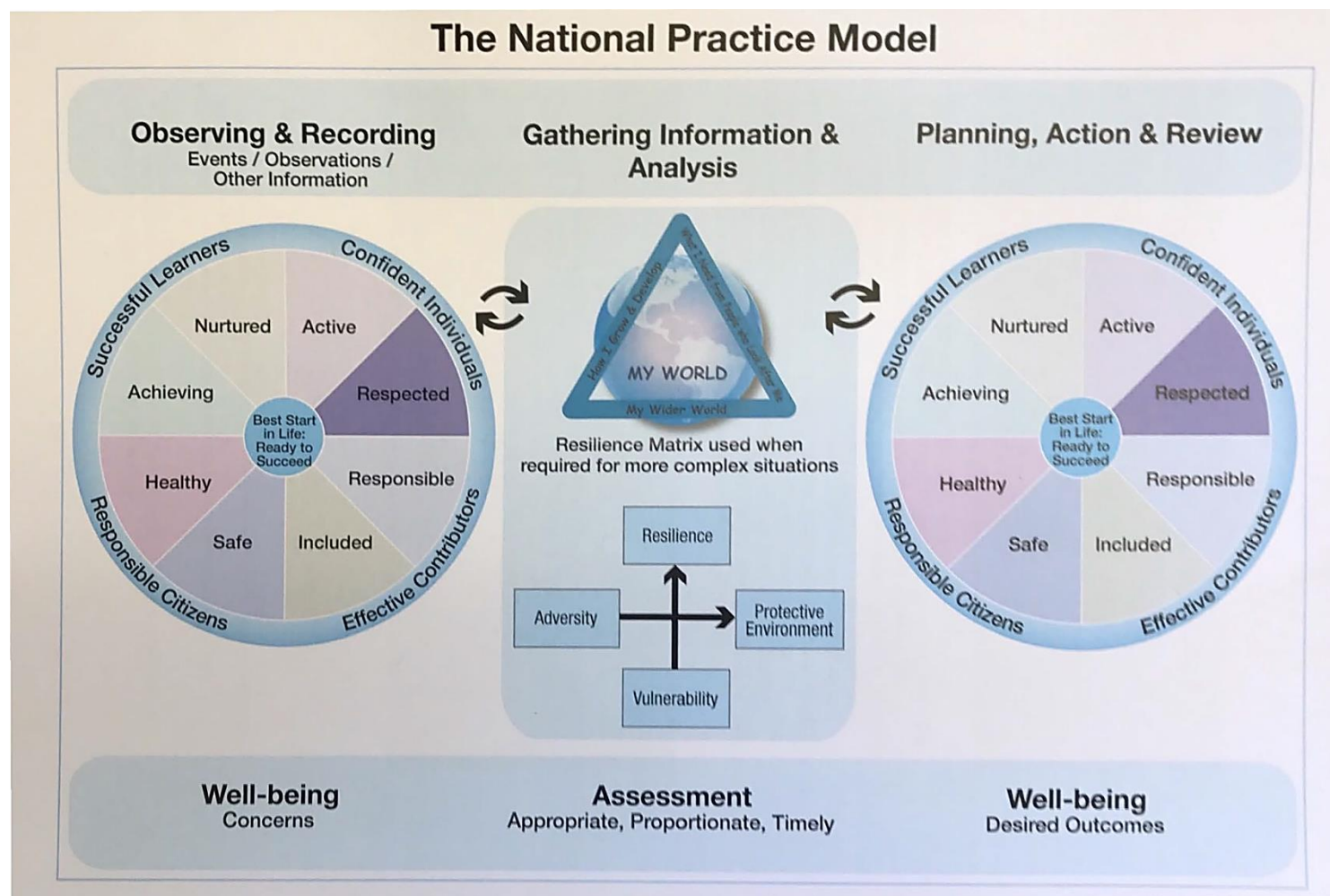
Appendix 10b – The Wellbeing Concerns Discussion Form

Appendix 11 – The Geography of Ballian Council: locating informants from the Children and Families Team and the Schools

Appendix 1 – Timeline of important documents showing increased commitment for integrating children’s services in Scotland

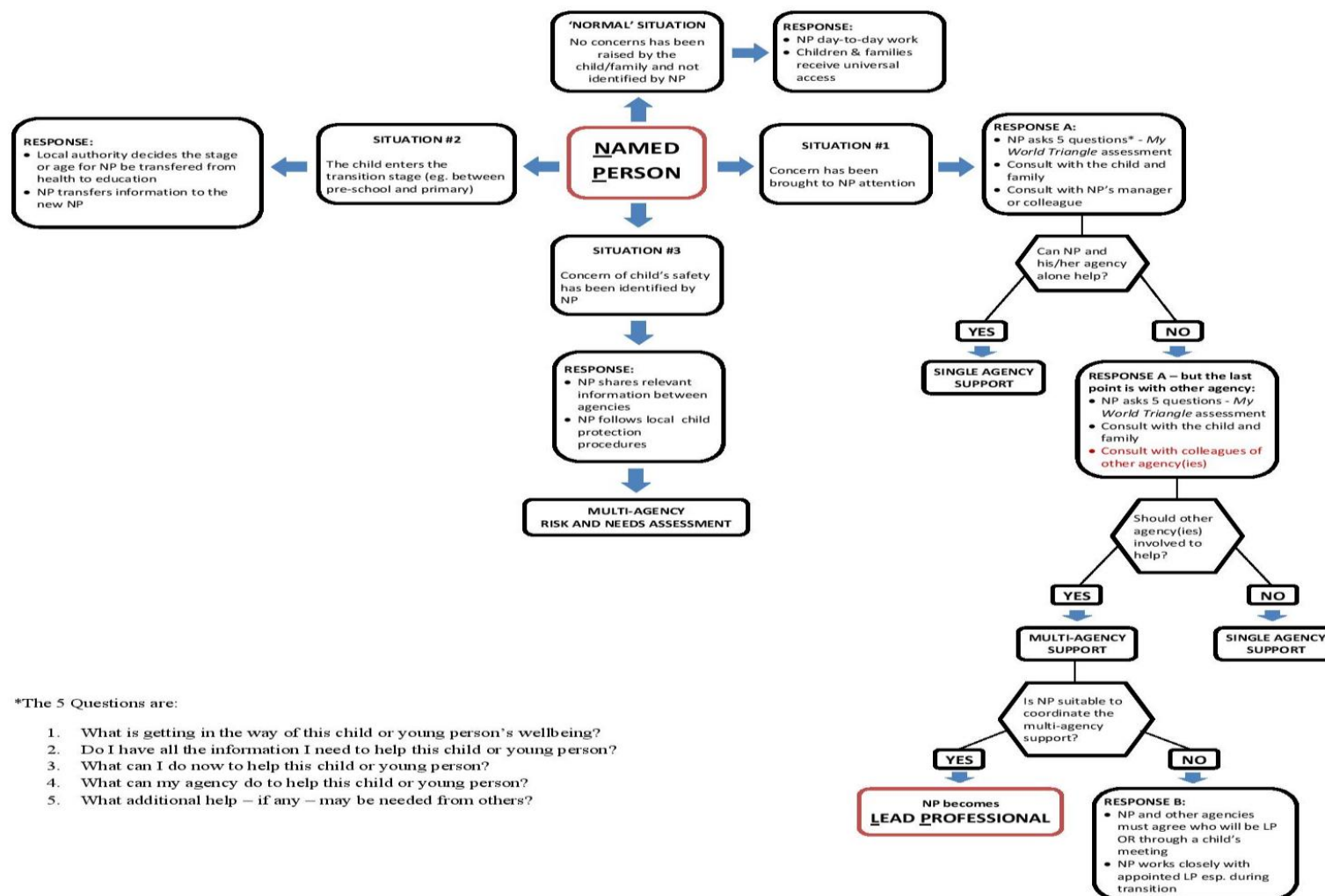


Appendix 2 – GIRFEC National Practice Model

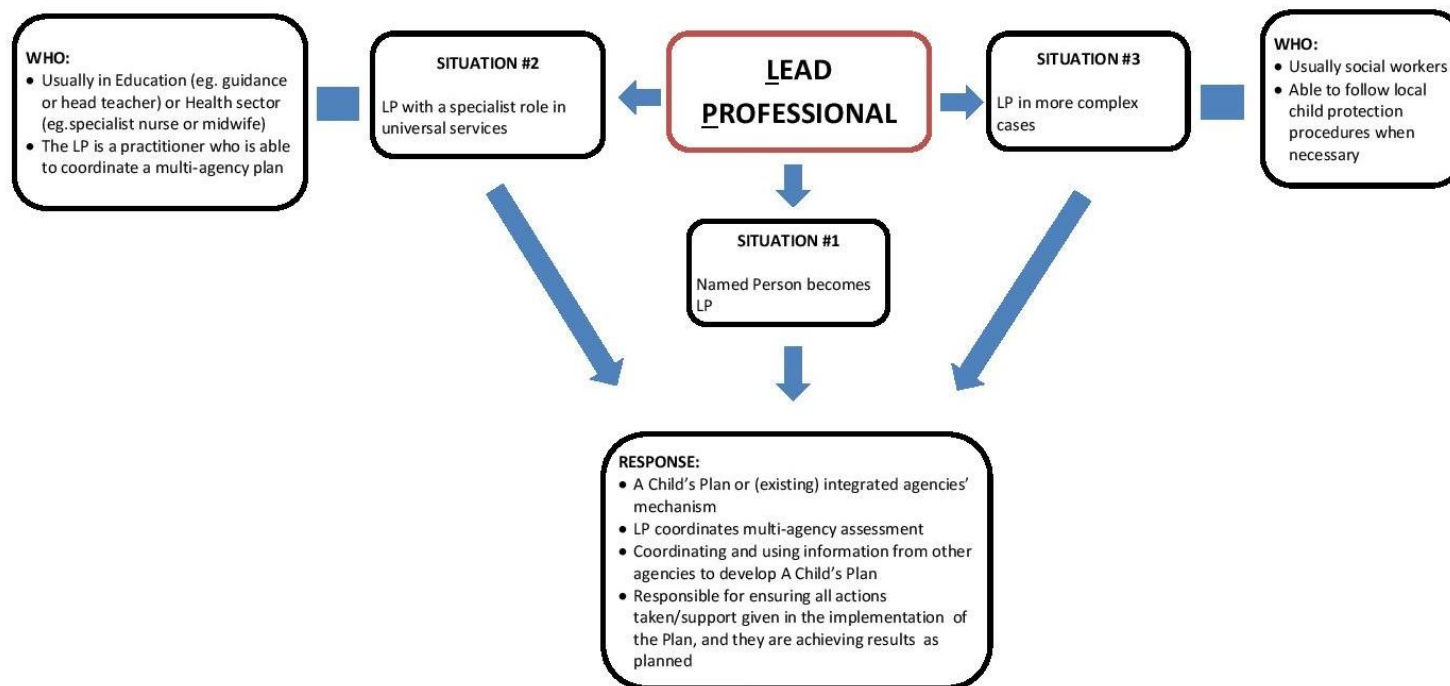


Source: Scottish Government (2010b). *A guide to implementing Getting it right for every child: Messages from pathfinders and learning partners.* Edinburgh, the Scottish Government

Appendix 3 – Route Map for Named Person in Single and Multi-Agency Support



Route Map for Lead Professional in Multi-Agency Support



Appendix 4 – Paragraph 19 of Part 4 Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 – Provision of Named Persons

19 Named person service

(1) In this Part, “named person service” means the service of making available, in relation to a child or young person, an identified individual who is to exercise the functions in subsection (5).

(2) An individual may be identified for the purpose of a named person service only if the individual falls within subsection (3).

(3) An individual falls within this subsection if—

(a) the individual—

(i) is an employee of the service provider, or

(ii) is, or is an employee of, a person who exercises any function on behalf of the service provider, and

(b) the individual meets such requirements as to training, qualifications, experience or position as may be specified by the Scottish Ministers by order.

(4) An individual does not fall within subsection (3) if the individual is a parent of the child or young person.

(5) The functions referred to in subsection (1) are—

(a) subject to subsection (6), doing such of the following where the named person considers it to be appropriate in order to promote, support or safeguard the wellbeing of the child or young person—

(i) advising, informing or supporting the child or young person, or a parent of the child or young person,

(ii) helping the child or young person, or a parent of the child or young person, to access a service or support, or

(iii) discussing, or raising, a matter about the child or young person with a service provider or relevant authority, and

(b) such other functions as are specified by this Act or any other enactment as being functions of a named person in relation to a child or young person.

(6) The function in subsection (5)(a) does not apply in relation to a matter arising at a time when the child or young person is, as a member of any of the reserve forces, subject to service law.

(7) The named person functions are exercised on behalf of the service provider concerned.

(8) Responsibility for the exercise of the named person functions lies with the service provider rather than the named person.

Source: Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. Available from

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2014/8/contents/enacted>. Accessed on 24 August

2017.

Appendix 5 – Level 1 and 2 Ethics Form



University of Edinburgh,
School of Social and Political Studies
RESEARCH AND RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
Self-Audit Checklist for Level 1 Ethical Review

The audit is to be conducted by the **Principal Investigator**, except in the following cases:

- **Postdoctoral research fellowships** – the applicant in collaboration with the proposed mentor.
- **Postgraduate research** (PhD and Masters by Research) – the student together with the supervisor. Note: All research postgraduates should conduct ethical self-audit of their proposed research as part of the proposal process. The audit should be integrated with the student's Review Board.
- **Taught Masters dissertation work and Undergraduate dissertation/project work** – in many cases this would not require ethical audit, but if it does (for example, if it involves original fieldwork), the student conducts the audit together with the dissertation/project supervisor, who keeps it on file.

Potential risks to participants and researchers

- 1 Is it likely that the research will induce any psychological stress or discomfort?
YES ☐ NO ☒
- 2 Does the research require any physically invasive or potentially physically harmful procedures?
YES ☐ NO ☒
- 3 Does the research involve sensitive topics, such as participants' sexual behaviour or illegal activities, their abuse or exploitation, or their mental health?
YES ☐ NO ☒
- 4 Is it likely that this research will lead to the disclosure of information about child abuse or neglect, or other information that would require the researchers to breach confidentiality conditions agreed with participants?
YES ☐ NO ☒
- 5 Is it likely that participation in this research could adversely affect participants?
YES ☐ NO ☒
- 6 Is it likely that the research findings could be used in a way that would adversely affect participants or particular groups of people?
YES ☐ NO ☒
- 7 Will the true purpose of the research be concealed from the participants? YES ☐ NO ☒
- 8 Is the research likely to involve any psychological or physical risks to the researcher, and/or research assistants, including those recruited locally?
YES ☐ NO ☒

Participants

- 9 Are any of the participants likely to:
be under 18 years of age? YES ☐ NO ☒
be physically or mentally ill? YES ☐ NO ☒
have a disability? MAYBE

be members of a vulnerable or stigmatized minority? YES ☐ NO ☒
 be in a dependent relationship with the researchers? YES ☐ NO ☒
 have difficulty in reading and/or comprehending any printed material distributed as part of the research process? **MAYBE**
 be vulnerable in other ways? YES ☐ NO ☒

- 10 Will it be difficult to ascertain whether participants are vulnerable in any of the ways listed above (e.g. where participants are recruited via the internet)? YES ☐ NO ☒
 11 Will participants receive any financial or other material benefits because of participation, beyond standard practice for research in your field? YES ☐ NO ☒

Before completing the next sections, please refer to the University Data Protection Policy to ensure that the relevant conditions relating to the processing of personal data under Schedule 2 and 3 are satisfied. Details are Available at: www.recordsmanagement.ed.ac.uk

Confidentiality and handling of data

- 12 Will the research require the collection of personal information about individuals (including via other organisations such as schools or employers) without their direct consent? YES ☐ NO ☒
 13 Will individual responses be attributed or will participants be identifiable, without the direct consent of participants? YES ☐ NO ☒
 14 Will datafiles/audio/video tapes, etc. be retained after the completion of the study (or beyond a reasonable time period for publication of the results of the study)? YES ☐ NO ☒
 15 Will the data be made available for secondary use, without obtaining the consent of participants? YES ☐ NO ☒

Informed consent

- 16 Will it be difficult to obtain direct consent from participants? YES ☐ NO ☒

Conflict of interest

The University has a 'Policy on the Conflict of Interest', which states that a conflict of interest would arise in cases where an employee of the University might be "compromising research objectivity or independence in return for financial or non-financial benefit for him/herself or for a relative or friend." See: http://www.docs.csg.ed.ac.uk/HumanResources/Policy/Conflict_of_Interest.pdf

Conflict of interest may also include cases where the source of funding raises ethical issues, either because of concerns about the moral standing or activities of the funder, or concerns about the funder's motivation for commissioning the research and the uses to which the research might be put.

The University policy also states that the responsibility for avoiding a conflict of interest, in the first instance, lies with the individual, but that potential conflicts of interest should always be disclosed, normally to the line manager or Head of Department. Failure to disclose a conflict of interest or to cease involvement until the conflict has been resolved may result in disciplinary action and in serious cases could result in dismissal.

- 17 Does your research involve a conflict of interest as outlined above? YES ☐ NO ☒

Overall assessment

If all the answers are NO, the self audit has been conducted and confirms the ABSENCE OF REASONABLY FORESEEABLE ETHICAL RISKS. The following text should be emailed to the relevant person, as set out below:

“I confirm that I have carried out the School Ethics self-audit in relation to [my / name of researcher] proposed research project [name of project and funding body] and that no reasonably foreseeable ethical risks have been identified.”

- Research grants– the Principal Investigator should send this email to the SSPS Research Office (ssps.research@ed.ac.uk) where it will be kept on file with the application.
- Postdoctoral research fellowships – the Mentor should email the SSPS Research Office (ssps.research@ed.ac.uk) where it will be kept on file with the application.
- Postgraduate research (PhD and Masters by Research) – there is no need to send the Level 1 email. The ethical statement should be included in the student’s Review Board report.
- Taught Masters dissertation work and Undergraduate dissertation/project work – there is no need to send the level 1 email. The dissertation supervisor should retain the ethical statement with the student’s dissertation/project papers.

If one or more answers are YES, risks have been identified and level 2 audit is required. See the School Research Ethics Policy and Procedures webpage http://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/admin/info_research/ethics for full details.

University of Edinburgh
School of Social and Political Studies
RESEARCH AND RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
Ethical review form for level 2 and level 3 auditing



This form should be used for any research projects carried out under the auspices of SSPS that have been identified by self-audit as requiring detailed assessment - i.e. level 2 and level 3 projects (see <http://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/research/ethics>). This form provides general School-wide provisions. Proposers should feel free to supplement these with detailed provisions that may be stipulated by research collaborators (e.g. NHS) or professional bodies (e.g. BSA, SRA). The signed and completed form should be submitted, along with a copy of the research proposal (or a description of the research goals and methodology where this is unavailable) to the relevant person:

- For staff applying for external funding, the PI should submit the form to Research Office
- For Postdoctoral Fellows, the Mentor should submit the form to Research Office
- For PG Research (PhD or MSc by Research), the Supervisor should submit the form to Director of the Graduate School.
- For UG Dissertations, the Supervisor should submit the form to the Programme/Dissertation Convenor.

Research and Research Ethics Committee will monitor level 2 proposals to satisfy themselves that the School Ethics Policy and Procedures are being complied with. They will revert to proposers in cases where there may be particular concerns or queries. For level 3 audits, work should not proceed until Research and Research Ethics Committee (or the Director of Graduate Studies, in the case of postdoctoral research) has considered the issues raised. Level 3 applications should be submitted well in advance of a required date of approval.

Research Office may monitor the implementation of arrangements for dealing with ethical issues through the lifetime of research projects. Please ensure you keep a record of how you are addressing ethics issues in the course of your research (e.g. consent forms, disclosure processes, storage of data, discussion of ethical issues by project advisory board). Do contact the Research Administrator if any unanticipated ethics issues arise in the course of your research/after the completion of your project.

SECTION 1: PROJECT DETAILS

1.1 Title of Project

'We make it work as we go along': Exploring the practice of working together in Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)

1.2 Principal Investigator, and any Co-Investigator(s) (Please provide details of Name, Institution, Email and Telephone)

Harla Sara Octarra
PhD Student in Social Policy
School of Social and Political Science
University of Edinburgh
H.S.Octarra@sms.ed.ac.uk
+447969121973

1.4 Does the sponsor require formal prior ethical review? YES ☐ NO ☒

If yes, by what date is a response required

1.5 Does the project require the approval of any other institution and/or ethics committee?

YES ☒

NO

☐

If YES, give details and indicate the status of the application at each other institution or ethics committee (i.e. submitted, approved, deferred, rejected).

From my correspondence with **Council's name Council (i.e. Director of Education, Communities and Economy), they welcome my research proposal and there is a strong possibility that my research can be conducted there. The council is waiting for updates on my research plan, in order to discuss the possibility further.**

1.6 This project has been assessed using this checklist and is judged to be
LEVEL2 ☒ (for information to Research Ethics Committee) ☐

LEVEL 3 ☐ (for discussion by Research Ethics Committee)

1.7 If Level 3, is there a date by which a response from the committee is required?
Name..... Signature.....

PLEASE ATTACH A COPY OF THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL (OR ALTERNATIVELY A DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH)
SECTION 2: POTENTIAL RISKS TO PARTICIPANTS

2.1 Is it likely that the research will induce any psychological stress or discomfort? YES ☐ NO ☒

If YES, state the nature of the risk and what measures will be taken to deal with such problems.

2.2 Does the research require any physically invasive or potentially physically harmful procedures? YES ☐ NO ☒

If YES, give details and outline procedures to be put in place to deal with potential problems.

2.3 Does the research involve sensitive topics, such as participants' sexual behaviour, illegal activities, their experience of violence, their abuse or exploitation, their mental health, or their ethnic status? YES ☐ NO ☒

If YES, give details.

2.4 Is it likely that this research will lead to the disclosure of information about child abuse or neglect or other information that would require the researchers to breach confidentiality conditions agreed with participants? YES ☐ NO ☒

If YES, indicate the likelihood of such disclosure and your proposed response to this.

If there is a real risk of such disclosure triggering an obligation to make a report to Police, Social Work or other authorities, a warning to this effect must be included in the Information and Consent documents.

2.5 Is it likely that the research findings could be used in a way that would adversely affect participants or particular groups of people? YES ☐ NO ☒

If YES, describe the potential risk for participants of this use of the data. Outline any steps that will be taken to protect participants.

It is unlikely that my research findings could be used in a way that would adversely affect the participants. However, I will maintain the anonymity of my research participants in my thesis, any publications/presentations, and dissemination materials.

- 2.6 Is it likely that participation in this research could adversely affect participants in any other way? YES ☐ NO ☒

If YES, give details and outline procedures to be put in place to deal with such problems.

- 2.7 Is this research expected to benefit the participants, directly or indirectly?

YES ☒ NO ☐

If YES, give details.

Findings on the influence of organised work processes (e.g. bureaucracy, management, systems) towards daily practice of working together between practitioners in children's services will be useful for the practitioners in managing their roles both as professionals in their profession, and as workers within organisations. Also, the findings can be used by policy makers in their policy agenda that includes interagency working.

- 2.8 Will the true purpose of the research be concealed from the participants?

YES ☐ NO ☒

If YES, explain what information will be concealed and why. Will participants be debriefed at the conclusion of the study? If not, why not?

SECTION 3: POTENTIAL RISKS TO THE RESEARCHER/S

- 3.1 Is the research likely to involve any psychological or physical risks to the researcher, and/or research assistants), including those recruited locally? YES ☐ NO ☒

If Yes, explain what measures will be taken to ensure adequate protection/support.

SECTION 4: PARTICIPANTS

- 4.1 How many participants is it hoped to include in the research?

My research is ethnographic in nature, although it will make use of methods other than observations, these being interviews and document analysis. There is not a set number of participants that I hope to recruit. It will depend on the direction the research takes and on who can provide the relevant knowledge, as indicated in the observation/interviews/documents.

- 4.2 What criteria will be used in deciding on the inclusion and exclusion of participants in the study?

Practitioners, potential to be (are) the Named Person and the Lead Professional, will be interviewed and also their first line managers. These practitioners along with other practitioners, who are present in multi-agency local forum meetings, will be subject to observations during the meetings, and maybe in informal talks.

4.3 Are any of the participants likely to:

be under 18 years of age?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
be looked after children (including those living in local authority care or those living at home with a legal supervision requirement)?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
be physically or mentally ill?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
have a disability?	MAYBE	
be members of a vulnerable or stigmatized minority?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
be unlikely to be proficient in English?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
be in a client or professional relationship with the researchers?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
be in a student-teacher relationship with the researchers?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
be in any other dependent relationship with the researchers?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
have difficulty in reading and/or comprehending any printed material distributed as part of the research process?	MAYBE	
be vulnerable in other ways?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

If YES to any of the above, explain and describe the measures that will be used to protect and/or inform participants.

At this stage I do not know whether I will work with a practitioner with disability or not.

Should this happen, I will consult with my contact person in the **Council's name Council (i.e. Director of Education, Communities and Economy) to know the best way to gain consent and ensure the practitioner is well-informed of my research.**

Do the researchers need to be cleared through the Disclosure (Protecting Vulnerable Groups) Scheme?
See http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/pvg/pvg_index.html **MAYBE**

From my volunteering work, I have a PVG Scheme Membership to work with children. As I may meet children in my research (although they are not my research participants), the **Council's name Council may require me to provide documentation of my PVG Scheme Membership, and so if this happens I shall apply to update my PVG Scheme membership.**

Will it be difficult to ascertain whether participants are vulnerable in any of the ways listed above (e.g. where participants are recruited via the internet)? YES ☐ NO ☐
☒

If YES, what measures will be used to verify the identity of participants, or protect vulnerable participants?

4.4 How will the sample be recruited?

Through **Council's name Council's Education and Children's Services Division.**

4.5 Will participants receive any financial or other material benefits because of participation?

YES ☐

NO ☒

If YES, what benefits will be offered to participants and why?

Before completing Sections 5 & 6 please refer to the University Data Protection Policy to ensure that the relevant conditions relating to the processing of personal data under Schedule 2 and Schedule 3 are satisfied. Details are Available at:

www.recordsmanagement.ed.ac.uk

SECTION 5: CONFIDENTIALITY AND HANDLING OF DATA

5.1 Will the research require the collection of personal information from e.g. universities, schools, employers, or other agencies about individuals without their direct consent?

YES ☐

NO ☒

If YES, state what information will be sought and why written consent for access to this information will not be obtained from the participants themselves.

5.2 Does the research involve the collection of sensitive data (including visual images of respondents) through the internet?

YES ☐

NO



If YES, describe measures taken to ensure written consent for access to this information.

5.3 Will any part of the research involving participants be audio/film/video taped or recorded using any other electronic medium?

YES ☒

NO ☐

If YES, what medium is to be used and how will the recordings be used?

Digital audio recorder.

5.4 Who will have access to the raw data?

I, the researcher. Anonymous raw data can potentially be shared with my supervisors.

5.5 Will participants be identifiable, including through internet searches?

YES ☐

NO ☒

If YES, how will their consent to quotations/identifications be sought?

5.6 If not, how will anonymity be preserved?

Pseudonyms will be used to replace the research participants' names in the research output, and in the thesis, as well as other publications based on my PhD. Audio files will not contain interviewees' personal information. All reporting documents that contain information on families and children will be kept confidential and I will only consult them when a practitioner is present. I will not store these kinds of documentation.

5.7 Will the datafiles/audio/video tapes, etc. be disposed of after the study? YES ☒ NO ☐

5.8 How long they will be retained?

Datafiles will be kept for 6 months after the conclusion of my PhD.

5.9 How will they eventually be disposed of?

All datafiles will be deleted from the University server.

5.10 How do you intend for the results of the research to be used?

The results will be used in my PhD thesis and publications as well as presentations. They will also be used in dissemination with practitioners in children's services and possibly with policy makers.

5.11 Will feedback of findings be given to participants? YES ☒
NO ☐

If YES, how and when will this feedback be provided?

After completion of my fieldwork and analysis, I will disseminate my findings to my research participants. The dissemination activity will be decided during fieldwork, as I do not know to what extent the findings can be shared within the organisational setting of the Council. I will send a summary of the PhD thesis to the Office of Education and Children's Services at the **Council's name Council shortly after completion of my PhD.**

SECTION 6: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND CONSENT

6.1 Will written consent be obtained from participants?

YES ☒ for interviews

NO ☒ for multi-agency meetings and home-visit. Instead, verbal informed consent will be sought.

If YES, attach a copy of the information sheet and consent forms.

In some contexts of ethnographic research, written consent may not be obtainable or may not be meaningful. If written consent will NOT be obtained, please explain why circumstances make obtaining consent problematic.

For the multi-agency meetings and social worker's home visit, I will provide a research information sheet and oral informed consent shall be sought. For the home-visit, I propose that the Social Worker would help in the process of gaining the families' consent. It is considered appropriate for the Social Worker to explain my purpose of coming along to the family beforehand. As for the meeting, it may be time-consuming and technically difficult to obtain written consent from everyone in the meeting. The oral informed consent will be verified in the minutes meeting.

Administrative consent may be deemed sufficient:

- a) for studies where the data collection involves aggregated (not individual) statistical information and where the collection of data presents:
 - (i) no invasion of privacy;
 - (ii) no potential social or emotional risks:
- b) for studies which focus on the development and evaluation of curriculum materials, resources, guidelines, test items, or programme evaluations rather than the study, observation, and evaluation of individuals.

6.2 Will administrative consent be obtained in lieu of participants' consent? YES ☐
NO ☒

If YES, explain why individual consent is not considered necessary.

In the case of research in online spaces or using online technology to access participants, will consent be obtained from participants?

If YES, explain how this consent will be obtained.

If NO, give reasons.

6.3 In the case of children under 16 participating in the research on an individual basis, will the consent or assent of parents be obtained?

NOT RELEVANT

If YES, explain how this consent or assent will be obtained.

If NO, give reasons.

6.4 Will the consent or assent (at least verbal) of children under 16 participating in the research on an individual basis be obtained?

NOT RELEVANT

If YES, explain how this consent or assent will be obtained.

If NO, give reasons.

6.5 In the case of participants whose first language is not English, will arrangements be made to ensure informed consent?

NOT RELEVANT

If YES, what arrangements will be made?

If NO, give reasons.

6.6 In the case of participants with disabilities (e.g. learning difficulties or mental health problems), will arrangements be made to ensure informed consent?

YES ☒ NO ☐

If YES, what arrangements will be made?

I will consult with the Division's Director on how to negotiate consent with staff with disability.

If NO, give reasons.

6.7 Many funders encourage making datasets available for use by other researchers. Will the data collected in this research be made available for secondary use? YES ☐ NO ☒

If YES, what arrangements are in place to ensure the consent of participants to secondary use?

SECTION 7: Unplanned/unforeseen problems

7.1 Is the research likely to encounter any significant ethical risks that cannot be planned for at this stage?

YES ☐ NO ☒

If YES, please indicate what arrangements are being made to address these as they arise in the course of the project.

SECTION 8: CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The University has a 'Policy on the Conflict of Interest', which states that a conflict of interest would arise in cases where an employee of the University might be "compromising research objectivity or independence in return for financial or non-financial benefit for him/herself or for a relative or friend." See: http://www.docs.csg.ed.ac.uk/HumanResources/Policy/Conflict_of_Interest.pdf

Conflict of interest may also include cases where the source of funding raises ethical issues, either because of concerns about the moral standing or activities of the funder, or concerns about the funder's motivation for commissioning the research and the uses to which the research might be put.

The University policy states that the responsibility for avoiding a conflict of interest, in the first instance, lies with the individual, but that potential conflicts of interest should always be disclosed, normally to the line manager or Head of Department. Failure to disclose a conflict of interest or to cease involvement until the conflict has been resolved may result in disciplinary action and in serious cases could result in dismissal.

8.1 Does your research involve a conflict of interest as outlined above

YES ☐ NO

☒

If YES, give details.

Appendix 6 – Research Information Sheet and

Consent Forms

Research Information Leaflet

(for general posting around the Office of Education and Children's Services Division)

Research topic: How do practitioners work together with other practitioners?



About the researcher

My name is Harla Sara Octarra and I am a PhD Student in Social Policy at the University of Edinburgh. I am originally from Indonesia, where I used to work closely with practitioners in children's services. Now I am very keen to learn from the experiences of practitioners in Scotland's children's services.

About the research

My research is focussed on understanding the process of working together between practitioners in children's services. GIRFEC's implementation is the context of my research and I have chosen your Council as my case study.

I will be doing my research in coordination with ****Council's name**** Council's Education and Children's Services Division. The research has three main parts: observations, interviews, and analysis of documents which are related to the processes of 'working together'. I will be around your office for 7 to 8 months (starting from November 2014).

The relevance of my research

I believe that my research will support practitioners in living up to their dual-role : as practitioners of their professions and as workers inside institutions, with a constantly changing policy agenda.

Who will be involved?

I will work closely with the Named Person and the Lead Professional. This entails interviewing them and their line managers. It also entails observations in locality forum meetings. For each of these research activities I will seek the participants' informed consent beforehand. In addition, as data for my research is also likely to be found through informal talks with you and your colleagues, I may engage in coffee talks at your office.

All research participants are able to change their minds about their participation at any time. If you have questions or concerns about your involvement or my presence, please feel free to get in touch with me. If you do not want to get involved, please fill in the 'opt out' form that you can find at the receptionist. If you do opt out, this does not guarantee that I will never interact with you at all, because I may still join in informal talks. But if that happens, I will not use our interactions as data.

Anonymity and confidentiality

The data gathered from my research will be used in writing up my PhD thesis. The data could later be used in publications including, but not limited to, journal articles and book chapters. However, I will not share your name or other personal information to other parties and they shall not be shown anywhere in the thesis.

Contact information

If you have any questions about my research, please feel free to contact me at the following email address: **H.S.Octarra@sms.ed.ac.uk**

I look forward to meeting you over the next few months.

Warm regards,
Harla

Opt Out Form

(for practitioners/staff in the Office of Education and Children's Services Division)

Research topic : How do practitioners work together with other practitioners?
Researcher : Harla Sara Octarra

Dear Practitioner,

This form allows you to opt out of your involvement in my research. Please fill in your name, date and signature at the space below, and return the form to the receptionist. I will make sure I collect this form the next time I come to your office.

It is likely that I will still see you from time to time because my research takes place at your office. If we interact I will not use our interactions as data.

Please understand that you can change your mind at any time, so feel free to have a chat if you see me around or drop an email to H.S.Octarra@sms.ed.ac.uk.

Kind regards,
Harla

Your name: _____

Date and signature: (*dd/mm/yyyy*) _____

Participant Information Leaflet (for interviewing practitioners)

Research topic: How do practitioners work together with other practitioners?



About the researcher

My name is Harla Sara Octarra and I am a PhD Student in Social Policy at the University of Edinburgh. I am originally from Indonesia, where I used to work closely with practitioners in children's services. I am very keen to learn from the experiences of practitioners in Scotland's children's services.

About the research

My research is focussed on understanding the process of working together between practitioners in children's services. GIRFEC's implementation is the context of my research and I have chosen your Council as my case study.

The research is supported by ****Council's name**** Council's Education and Children's Services Division. It has three main parts: observations, interviews, and analysis of documents which are related to work processes of 'working together'. Altogether the activities will take 6 to 7 months to finish (starting from January 2015).

The relevance of my research

I believe that my research will contribute to the development of interagency working in practice.

Do you have to do this?

No. It is up to you. Even if you agree to be interviewed but later on in the interview wish to change your mind, feel free to stop it. In such case, I will not use any part of the interview in my research. Equally, you can choose not to answer any question you do not want to answer. If you have questions or concerns about your involvement, please get in touch with me.

Anonymity and confidentiality

If you agree, this interview will be audio-recorded and I will be writing some things down. The recordings will be transcribed but any identifiable information will not show in the transcriptions. Instead, pseudonyms will be used to replace names. Later on in writing up my thesis or writing for publications, I may want to include some direct quotations from this interview, but I will not include any identifiable information. However, there is an exception to confidentiality: if concerns arise regarding child protection issues, I will follow procedures outlined in "Inter-agency Child Protection Procedures ****Council's name****". If concerns arise regarding your welfare I will notify your manager.

Contact information

If you have any questions about my research, please feel free to contact me at the following email address: **H.S.Octarra@sms.ed.ac.uk**

Thank you for taking the time to read this Information Sheet. Please turn to the next page if you agree to be interviewed; I will collect this page when we meet for the interview.

Kind regards,
Harla

Consent Form for Practitioner
(for interviewing practitioners/managers)

Research topic : How do practitioners work together with other practitioners?

Researcher : Harla Sara Octarra

Dear Staff,

Thank you for your interest in my research. Please read the following statements carefully.

I AGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS:

I have read and understood the Participant Information Leaflet and have been given a chance to discuss it with the researcher.

I am not being rewarded financially or otherwise for my participation in this interview.

I understand that this interview will be audio-recorded unless I object.

I understand that direct quotes from this interview might be used in future reports or publications.

I have had the opportunity to discuss the purpose of this study and to ask questions.

I, _____ agree to be interviewed.

Signature _____ Date _____

Researcher Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Research topic: How do practitioners work together with other practitioners?



About the researcher

My name is Harla Sara Octarra and I am a PhD Student in Social Policy at the University of Edinburgh. I am originally from Indonesia, where I used to work closely with practitioners in children's services. Now I am very keen to learn from the experiences of practitioners in Scotland's children's services.

About the research

My research is focussed on understanding the process of working together between practitioners in children's services. GIRFEC's implementation is the context of my research and I have chosen your Council as my case study.

The research is supported by ****Council's name**** Council's Education and Children's Services Division. It has three main parts: *observations*, *interviews*, and *analysis of documents* which are related to the processes of 'working together'. Altogether the activities will take 6 to 7 months to finish (starting from January 2015).

The relevance of my research

I believe that my research will contribute to the development of interagency working in practice.

What will I do?

The *observations* includes attending the locality forum meetings, such as this one. This means I will sit inside the meeting room and take notes. If it is okay with you, I would also like to read the minutes of the meeting. After reading this information leaflet, if you have any questions please have a chat with me.

If you allow me to observe this meeting and read the minutes of the meeting please tell me or the meeting leader. If you do not want me to observe the meeting and/or read the minutes, please also let me or the meeting leader know.

Anonymity and confidentiality

The data gathered from my research will be used in writing up my PhD thesis. The data could later be used in publications including, but not limited to, journal articles and book chapters. I will not share your name or other personal information to other parties and they shall not be shown anywhere in the thesis. However, there is an exception to confidentiality: if concerns arise regarding child protection issues, I will follow procedures outlined in "Inter-agency Child

Protection Procedures ****Council's name****". If concerns arise regarding the wellbeing of the council staff I will notify the staff's manager.

Contact information

If you have further questions about my research, please feel free to contact me at the following email address: **H.S.Octarra@sms.ed.ac.uk**

Participant Information Leaflet – NOT USED

(for Families during practitioner's home visit)

Research topic: How do practitioners work together with other practitioners?



Who am I?

Hi, my name is Harla Sara Octarra and I am a PhD Student in Social Policy at the University of Edinburgh. I am originally from Indonesia, and I am here to learn about Scotland's children's services. I am here today with the practitioner working with you because I am doing research on the ways in which practitioners work together with other practitioners.

About my research

My research is focussed on understanding the process of working together between practitioners in children's services. GIRFEC's implementation is the context of my research and I have chosen ****Council's name**** Council as my case study.

I will be doing my research in cooperation with ****Council's name**** Council's Education and Children's Services Division. One of the research activities is observation. This entails 'shadow'ing the practitioner working with you during his/her home visits. I am not here to evaluate your service provisions nor the practitioner's performance. I am simply an observer of the practitioner's work.

Anonymity and confidentiality

It is likely that I will interact with you or your other family members but I will not use those interactions nor anything you say to the practitioner as my data.

Consent from you

If my presence is all right with you, please let the practitioner know. If you are not comfortable having me around also please let him/her know so that I will not join this home visit and leave. This will not affect your service provisions in any way, and the practitioner will not disclose any information from you to me. If you have any questions about my research, please feel free to talk to me or contact me at the following email address: **H.S.Octarra@sms.ed.ac.uk**

Thank you very much.

Warm regards,
Harla

Research topic: How do practitioners work together with other practitioners?



About the researcher

My name is Harla Sara Octarra and I am a PhD Student in Social Policy at the University of Edinburgh. I am originally from Indonesia, where I used to work closely with practitioners in children's services. Now I am very keen to learn from the experiences of practitioners in Scotland's children's services.

About the research

My research is focussed on understanding the process of working together between practitioners in children's services. *Getting It Right For Every Child* (GIRFEC) implementation is the context of my research and I have chosen your Council as my case study.

The research is supported by ****Council's name**** Council's Education and Children's Services Division. It has three main parts: *observations*, *interviews*, and *analysis of documents* which are related to the processes of 'working together'. Altogether the activities will take 6 to 7 months to finish (starting from January 2015).

The relevance of my research

I believe that my research will contribute to the development of interagency working in practice.

What will I do?

The *observations* includes attending GIRFEC trainings and meetings, such as this one. This means I will sit inside the meeting room and take notes. If it is okay with you, I would also like to read the minutes of the meeting. After reading this information leaflet, if you have any questions please have a chat with me.

If you allow me to observe this meeting and read the minutes of the meeting please tell me or the meeting leader. If you do not want me to observe the meeting and/or read the minutes, please also let me or the meeting leader know.

Anonymity and confidentiality

The data gathered from my research will be used in writing up my PhD thesis. The data could later be used in publications including, but not limited to, journal articles and book chapters. I will not share your name or other personal information to other parties and they shall not be shown anywhere in the thesis. However, there is an exception to confidentiality: if concerns arise regarding

child protection issues, I will follow procedures outlined in “Inter-agency Child Protection Procedures **Council’s name**”. If concerns arise regarding the wellbeing of the council staff I will notify the staff’s manager.

Contact information

If you have further questions about my research, please feel free to contact me at the following email address: **H.S.Octarra@sms.ed.ac.uk**



Who am I?

Hi, my name is Harla and I am a student at the University of Edinburgh. I am originally from Indonesia; it is a country about 8,000 miles from here. I came here to learn about Scotland's children's services.

What is my research about?

My research is looking at the ways in which practitioners (such as social workers, family support worker, health visitors) work together with other practitioners. It is supported by ****Council's name**** Council's Education and Children's Services Division. One of the research activities is observations. This means I am going to sit in this meeting and taking notes once in a while.

What will I do with my notes?

I will use my notes to write my research thesis. A thesis is a kind of very long essay. If it is good enough, some parts of my thesis can be published into articles or books (if I am very lucky!). I will not share your name to anyone or anywhere in the thesis. However, if I have concerns regarding your wellbeing, I will need to follow procedures outlined in "Inter-agency Child Protection Procedures ****Council's name****" for your protection. Also, if I have concerns regarding the wellbeing of the practitioner in this meeting, I will notify his/her manager.

What I ask from you?

If you don't mind me sitting in the meeting, please let your parents/carers know. But if you don't want me around, also please let them know and I won't sit in the meeting. As an alternative to sit in the meeting I may wish to read the notes or report of the meeting, but only if you allow it. Please let your parents/carers know if you allow this or not. If you have any questions about my research, please talk to me or e-mail me at **H.S.Octarra@sms.ed.ac.uk**

Thank you very much.

Warm regards,
Harla

Participant Information Leaflet (for Parents/Carers present in the meeting) – NOT USED

Research topic: How do practitioners work together with other practitioners?



Who am I?

Hi, my name is Harla Sara Octarra and I am a PhD Student in Social Policy at the University of Edinburgh. I am originally from Indonesia, and I am here to learn about Scotland's children's services.

About my research

My research is looking at the ways in which practitioners work together with other practitioners. The implementation of *Getting It Right For Every Child* (GIRFEC) policy of the Scottish Government is the context of my research and I have chosen ****Council's name**** Council as my case study.

The research is supported by ****Council's name**** Council's Education and Children's Services Division. One of the research activities is observations. This includes sitting in this meeting. I am not here to evaluate the services you receive nor the practitioners' performance. I am simply an observer of their working relations.

Anonymity and confidentiality

The data gathered from my research will be used in writing up my PhD thesis. The data could later be used in publications including, but not limited to, journal articles and book chapters. I will not share your name or other personal information to other parties and they shall not be shown anywhere in the thesis. However, there is an exception to confidentiality: if concerns arise regarding child protection issues, I will follow procedures outlined in "Inter-agency Child Protection Procedures ****Council's name****". If concerns arise regarding the wellbeing of the council staff I will notify the staff's manager.

Consent from you

If you are okay with my presence please let the Meeting Leader know. But if you are not, also please let the leader know and I will not sit in this meeting. Alternatively, if you allow me too, I may wish to read the Meeting Minutes. Please let the Meeting Leader know if you are okay with this or not. Whatever you decides it will not affect the services you receive in any way. If you have any questions about my research, please feel free to talk to me or e-mail me at: **H.S.Octarra@sms.ed.ac.uk**

Thank you very much.

Warm regards,
Harla

Appendix 7 – An example of an interview schedule

(for interviewing the GIRFEC Development Officer)

Specific Questions:

1. Confirm Job title and main task/responsibilities
2. In the GIRFEC training:
 - a. [And in the map], it is called Named Person Service, how so?
3. From the GIRFEC Practice Group meeting:
 - a. Correct me if I'm wrong, but in the GIRFEC practice group there was a discussion about database of health and social work (*Frameworki*) would be able to talk to each other, and you welcomed that. How important is that for your work or for other partners'?
 - b. [In the car back to Edinburgh] you mentioned you would like the meeting to have action points out of it. From the last meeting, what would be the example?
4. From the Named Person Implementation Group:
 - a. How about the forums (**Primary and Secondary Locality Forums**), what would happen?
 - b. What's the progress? In regards to Children and Families structure
 - c. Re discussion trainings for professionals on Named Person; you have collected schedules from schools **for staff training on Wellbeing**. What kind of training and would that be "mandatory"? Who should be in these trainings and what would be the focus-how's different from **the Council's GIRFEC implementation strategies** (which from the conversation seemed like there had been trainings about **the Council's GIRFEC implementation strategies** before)?
5. Regarding **a document about 'outcomes' she brought into a meeting**:
 - a. What are these (outcomes) for?
 - b. Who are using these?
 - c. If there's for example, red light, what will *you* or *others* do?
6. Wellbeing and **the Council's GIRFEC implementation strategies**:
 - a. I understand one of the ideas to implement Named Person is to make people used to with the language of wellbeing. I wonder how clear, do you think, people are with that term? Between the social work-health-education professionals
 - b. How clear are people with Stages of Intervention in **the Council's GIRFEC implementation strategies**?

7. Implementing Named Person Service:

- a. What would be the perceived challenges of implementing Named Person service?
- b. You were a Depute Head Teacher previously, in reflection, how would you assess school's readiness and what would be the difference now?

Note:

- Transition from NP to LP
- Ask from notes on docs!

Appendix 8 – Referral Form to Primary or Secondary

Locality Forum

(this is the researcher's composition based on the actual form shown by Amber, the Children and Families Team Leader. Some potentially identifiable information is not included.)

Name and Pupil's Information: (e.g. age, class, address)
Name of teacher who makes the referral: Reason for referral:
Has consent from parents being sought? Have they given their consent?
Additional notes (what support that has been given in school):
Teacher's signature and date:
Action points: <i>After the Locality Forum meeting ends, an admin worker will add action points of the meeting to this section along with the expected dates when the actions will be taken. Only schools who make the referral and the Children and Families Team will receive/keep the annotated version along with the minutes of meeting, to update their database.</i>

Appendix 9 – Referral Form to Children and Families

Some details have been changed to preserve the anonymity of the local authority.

Ballian Children and Families Referral Form

1. Name of child/young person being referred

Full Name (include family name or other surname child known by)	Year Group	DOB/ EDD	Gender	Ethnicity	School / Nursery

Address	Telephone Numbers
	Home:
	Mobile:

2. Parent or Carer Details (please enter main carer first)

Name 1:		Name 2:	
Address:		Address:	
Home Tel. No.		Home Tel. No.	
Mobile Tel. No.		Mobile Tel. No.	
Work Tel. No.		Work Tel. No.	

3. Details of siblings

Full Name	Year	DOB	Address	School/Nursery

4. What agencies are currently involved with this child/family?

Agency	Name	Address (including Practice Name)	Telephone Number

1

OFFICIAL USE ONLY			
Referral Source	Referral Method	Primary Reason for Referral	Secondary Reason for Referral
Police Child Concern Referral Number		Nature of Incident	Type of Incident
			EIO/YJO

5. What are your concerns/the details of the incident?

Are the children safe now?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Don't Know

INCIDENT DETAILS

What happened?

Where did the incident take place?

Who was involved?

Time and date of Incident:

REASON FOR REFERRAL / OTHER CONCERNS

SHANARRI INDICATORS (please tick which indicators are **AREAS OF CONCERN**)

Safe		Healthy		Active		Nurtured	
Achieving		Respected		Responsible		Included	

6. Family/Relevant History

--

7. What other supports are in place? (eg support from extended family)

Please specify what GIRFEC stage of support strategies that are already in place:

--

8. What additional support would be of benefit to this child/family and why?

--

9. Involvement of young person and their parent/carer

Is the subject aware of the referral?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Is the family aware of the referral?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Does the parent/carer agree with the referral?

☐ Yes

☐ No

10. Additional Information

Please enter any additional information here.

Date of Referral		
Name of Referrer	Position	Agency
Referrer's Telephone Number		Referrer's Email Address

If your referral is urgent and requires immediate attention, please forward this form to:

contact details

If your referral is less urgent and can wait for discussion at a Children & Families Allocation meeting (held WEEKLY), please forward this form to:

contact details

Appendix 10a – The Wellbeing Concerns Form

Some details have been changed to preserve the anonymity of the local authority.

NAMED PERSON NOTIFICATION WELLBEING CONCERN FORM			
Full Name: BABY/CHILD /YOUNG PERSON		Date of Birth	
Concern Shared with Parent		YES / NO	
PERSON RAISING CONCERN	ESTABLISHMENT/ AGENCY	CONTACT PHONE NUMBER	
NAMED PERSON		LEAD PROFESSIONAL (if allocated)	
Description of concerns including summary of previous concerns & supports currently in place <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 150px; width: 100%;"></div>			
Wellbeing Concern shared with Named Person by:-		Phone	Post
Signature		Date	E-mail
Action by the Named Person		By Whom	By When
Continue to monitor YES/NO		Gather more information YES/NO	
Organise a multi-agency assessment & planning meeting YES/NO		Contact Lead Professional YES/NO	
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> Review Date </div>			

Appendix 10b – The Wellbeing Concerns Discussion Form

Some details have been removed to preserve the anonymity of the local authority.

DATE: _____			
RECORD OF PUPIL WELLBEING DISCUSSION			
Full Name		Date of Birth	
School Name		Referrer	
Named Person		Staged Intervention	
Allocated Worker		Previous PCM/ 0-12 Forum discussion	Yes NO
Lead Professional		Parental Consent Received	Yes No
Family Address		Family Name	

Summary of concerns arising from information held including historical /Supports currently in place	
	Wellbeing Indicator
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	

Summary points of Discussion
•
•
•
•
•
•
•
•

Action	By Whom	By When

Continue to monitor	YES / NO	Gather more information	YES / NO
Contact Lead Professional	YES / NO	Organise multi-agency assessment & planning meeting	

Review Date	
-------------	--

Appendix 11 – The Geography of Ballian Council: locating *informants* from the Children and Families Team and the Schools

